BYRON'S

CHILDE HAROLD

CANTOS III & IV.

EDITED BY

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Second Edition

SEN, RAY & CO.,

BOOKSELLERS & PUBLISHERS

CORNWALLIS BUILDINGS,

Calcutta.

Introduction—Printed by Hem Chandra Ray.
SATHI PRESS
21-1, Patuatola Lane, Harrison Road, Calcutta
Text—Printed at Nababibhakar Press
Notes—Printed at Metcalf Press and Rushik Law Printing Works

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PREFACE

It is always necessary to understand a man, in order to understand his works, and with Byron the necessity seems to be greater than with others. More than any other poet, he has written himself out in his works—has taken us to the innermost sanctuary of his heart and permitted us to nestle comfortably there;—and this he has done—not consciously always—at times, perhaps against his will—but drawn by an inner impulse of nature which he could not resist. And so I have dealt with Byron's life at some length, at disproportionate length, it might seem, considering the scope of the book. But I should like our students to take an interest in the complex personality of a great literary artist—quite apart from the purposes of their immediate study; and this is my only apology for the space and attention I have given to Byron's life.

For an editor of text-books, it may not be seemly to play the part of an adviser to students. Still, speaking as one who has been dealing with students of all classes for many years now, I feel inclined to offer some advice on a point or two. In the first place, I should warn students against mistaking rhetoric and eloquence for

poetry. In the first two cantos of Childe Harold, there is abundance of splendid rhetoric—rhetoric that thrills the heart and makes the blood course madly through the veins; but of great poetry—poetry which is true now and true for ever, we get only rare and elusive glimpses. Undoubtedly the case is different with the third and fourth cantos; but there is a noticeable predominance of rhetoric even there.

Yet, while warning students against what I regard as the meretricious glamour of much of Byron's poetry, I should ask them to give themselves wholly, to yield without stint, resistance or reluctance to the matchless pathos of Byron's invocations to Greece. It is a great thing to feel greatly—to feel greatly always, specially to feel for the relics of past greatness, of vanished splendour and worth. Such feeling, wholly impersonal as it is, purifies the very roots of our being. And we, more than other people, have need to feel greatly and to feel impersonally.

27th June, 1915.
CALCUTTA.

Jitendra Lal Banerjee.

INTRODUCTION

LIFE OF BYRON

Poets do not always live poetic lives, at least in the sense in which the crowd would have it. Sometimes, they die tragically enough and in that way poetically. Shelley was drowned; Otway was choked in swallowing a piece of bread: Chatterton was starved in his garret; Marlowe was stabbed in a tavern-brawl. But in the case of most, even in the case of the greatest, the outer details of life are poor, barren and humdrum enough. Wordsworth was a stamp-collector; Burns was a guager: Scott was a thriving man of business: Goethe was a *rath* and the shrewdest man of affairs within a hundred miles of Weimar; and Shakespeare was a managing proprietor of theatres and a sedate owner of house-property. Not much of romance one should say, in the outer details of any of their lives.

But with Byron it was all different. Romance, mystery, enigma seemed to be the very atmosphere in which he lived and moved. An air of mystery, specially, hung over the whole tale of his travels in the east. He had swum over from Sestos to Abydos; had drunk and colleogued with pirates and corsairs; had even killed his man in duel,—they used to breathe in half-whispers in London drawing-rooms. But whether it was in London or the far east, it was ever the same with Byron. Romance dogged his footsteps and cast a glamour and charm over all his deeds and speeches; and not infreqently it led to a sad and tragic climax.

Poor Caroline Lamb! "That pale face will be my fate"—she said when first she met the poet in a Society drawing-room. And sure enough, in that pale, marble face, in those flashing, coal-black eyes, she found her fate. She loved and hero-worshipped the poet; then quarrelled

and broke with him and at last parted from him in wrath and stormful bitterness of soul. Long years afterwards at the turning of a street, she came across a procession of mourners—Byron's funeral cortege, she was told. Poor, poor lady! She shrieked and swooned away and was carried home raving mad. Was ever poet so loved before?

Think again of this. At eight he fell in love with a child named Mary Duff. His love for the girl was so vehement that when he heard of her being married, it threw him into convulsions. At twelve he fell in love with his cousin Margaret Parker. Later, but not much later, he became passionately fond of Miss Mary Chaworth—a love which lasted through life, though it never seems to have been requited. His passion, he says, had the usual effect upon him; he could not sleep, he could not eat, he could not rest. One of his boyish, school-boy intimacies was with Lord Clare; and years afterwards he said that he could not hear the mention of his name without a beating heart. Was ever poet so passionate before?

Think further of this. He loved genuinely but once—a love that was not requited, nay was received with something like contempt. His earliest personal friend died when he was still absent on his voyages. His mother died immediately after his return and before he could see her. He married a prude and this marriage turned out a disastrous failure. For three years he was the darling of Society; and then, in a spell of violent reaction, he was hounded out from England amidst a storm of hisses and bitter obloquy; and thenceforth he became a stranger to his home. Was ever poet so unlucky before?

But of this stormful, turbulent personality, a being of volcanic rages and passions, we have unfortunately no adequate biography left. What the real incidents of his life may have been we have no longer any means of knowing; and in the absence of reliable evidence, surprise and conjecture must play their blind and uncertain part. This need not have been so. Byron was a man who had no reserve or reticence in his nature. And left the fullest, minutest and most veracious record of his life with all its

failures, littlenesses and deformities—in his collection of letters, diaries and memorials. And all this rich and ample mass of material, he left at the absolute discretion of his friend, Thomas Moore, poet of the Irish melodies. But Byron, unlucky in many things, was unlucky also in his friendships and confidences. Moore—prim, conventional and little-souled, the darling of London drawing rooms and a stringer of melodious common-places—was Moore the person in whom to repose the confidences of this superb, prodigal and withal this erratic and eruptive nature ? Moore behaved after his kind. There was an outcry against the idea of publishing Byron's memoirs—an outcry proceeding mainly from the family of Lady Byron. Moore got frightened and so also did the publisher Murray. And to conclude the sordid story, Moore sold himself for £4000 and consigned the Mss. to ashes. Perhaps *sold* seems to be too strong a word : but it is not a bit too strong if the circumstances be taken into account. Of course a plausible and colorable air was given to the transaction. In return for the £ 4000 he got, Moore undertook to write a proper, conventional and personable life of the poet. And this he did producing a book which was no more a life of the poet than of a cloistered nun of the middle ages.

Thus, as we have said already, a full and trustworthy record of Byron's life is wanting and will always be wanted. Still a barren record of the outer facts of the poet's life may easily be gleaned from the details we have ; and such a barren record, we shall proceed to give below.

Birth ; ancestry : upbringing.

The Byrons were a family of ancient descent and perhaps came over to England at the time of the Conquest—Buron or Burun being the Norman form of the name. But the founder of the Byron family, as we know it, was Sir John Byron to whom, at the time of the dissolution of the monasteries, Henry gave the priory and lands of Newstead Abbey. (1540.) The first Lord Byron, a great grandson of the founder, was John, a cavalier general, who was raised.

to the peerage in 1643. The poet was the *sixth* baron of his name, being the great-nephew of William, the 5th Lord Byron. We do not know much of the poet's ancestry: but from the little we know, it appears that the Byrons were a shiftless and feckless family, a fighting, quarrelling, blustering lot who never did much good in the world.

Whatever the ancient history of the family might be, the poet certainly was not fortunate in his immediate ancestors. His great uncle, the 5th lord, was a sort of raving maniac, had killed a man in duel in a tavern-brawl—the duel, to add to its horrors, having taken place by candlelight. His grandfather, admiral John Byron, was known as "foul-weather Jack," because of the persistent ill-luck which dogged his voyages. His father was a libertine by choice and profession: he had eloped with the Marchioness of Caermerthen—an elopement which led to her divorce—and then married her. After her death, he married Catherine Gordon of Gight, an Aberdeenshire lady who was something of an heiress in her own right and by whom he had the poet for his son. It is certain that Mrs. Byron was abominably treated by her husband, who wasted her fortune, deserted her, became reconciled to her again and died obscurely in France in 1791. Of the poet's mother, we shall have more to say anon.

Byron himself was born at London on the 22nd of January, 1788. But he was a Londoner only by accident—his mother at that time being on her way home to Scotland from France. And it was in Scotland that he was brought up and spent the first years of his life—thus justifying the poet's saying that he was 'half a Scot by birth and bred a whole one,' and also his half-humorous, half-deprecating remark that he never succeeded in killing the Scotchman within him.

The poet's father, as we have said before, died in his infancy; and so he was left in the sole charge of his mother. She, poor lady, was not a bad woman at bottom but was the worst mother possible. She was vain, capricious, passionate and alternated between fits of extreme rage and foolish, extravagant fondness. The poet was

lame from his birth, a source of much misery to him in his later life ; and his mother, incredible as it may seem, would, in her moments of rage, run shouting 'lame brat' after him and would throw tongs and fire-shovels at his head. Once, the quarrel between the two was so terrible that each went secretly to the apothecary's shop inquiring anxiously whether the other had been to purchase poison or not. Such was the poet's parentage and such the circumstances of his early training. A heartless, coarse-grained libertine for his father, a woman of ungovernable moods for his mother : truly a sad and pitiable state of things, and proving the poet as more deserving of pity than of blame.

To conclude the account of the very first period of the poet's life, we may say that his childhood was spent amidst circumstances of much poverty and that this poverty came to an end only when the poet's mother received a Civil List pension of £300. He succeeded to the title in 1798 when he was ten years old and it was then that he came for the first time to England and went for residence to Newstead Abbey. But Newstead was then dilapidated and no fit place for habitation ; and so they removed shortly afterwards to lodgings in London.

Life in school and College : First entrance into Literature.

The poet's early training had been rather desultory and casual : and it was in 1799, after removal to London, that he was sent to the preparatory school of a Dr. Glennie. The master perceiving that the boy had a genuine taste for literature left him to his own devices and gave him the free run of an excellent library. And here Byron went twice through a set of the British poets from end to end. One may say that there could be no better preparation for the future poet—considering specially the receptive and inflammable nature of his mind. In 1801, Byron was sent to Harrow ; and here, in the intervals of swimming, cricketing and forming boy-friendships—friendships which were with him 'strong as passions'—he managed to lay in a stock of abundant miscellaneous information and contrived also to get a general and most excellent knowledge of the

classics. Altogether, the Harrow period was a fruitful and useful one to the poet. It gained for him a few deeply attached friends and made him a classic, if not a classical scholar. It was at Harrow also that there occurred the first love-episode in the life of the poet—an episode which cast a tinge of bitterness over all the rest of his days. The object of the passion was Miss Mary Chaworth, a cousin of the poet and heiress of Annesley Hall and Park, a property which lay adjacent to Newstead Abbey. The girl, from what we know of her, seems to have been shallow, flighty and vain, and what is worse, played and trifled with the poet's affections when she had no intention of ever returning them. The lady married afterwards a gentleman, a country squire of the very prosaic name of Musters ; and there may have been some poetic justice in the fact that her marriage proved unhappy and that she had to separate from her husband after a few years of marriage.

From Harrow, Byron went to Trinity College, Cambridge—an unfortunate change by all accounts. He learned little that was good there and much that was evil. Young men, specially fashionable and aristocratic young men, lived very fast in Cambridge in those days ; and Byron, aided by his inherited tendency towards dissoluteness, went the pace equally with the rest of his young compeers. "The place," he says "is the devil" ; and he, like his other College-friends, joined enthusiastically in this devil-worship. In any case, he carried away little that was good from Cambridge except, as at Harrow, a few close and intimate friendships.

But there was one event of momentous importance which happened in the poet's life while he was still at Cambridge. During the vacation of 1806-1807, he wrote and published most of his juvenile poems. At least one of these was frankly indecent and so the whole of the first issue was withdrawn. The book was then expurgated, recast and published under the name of *Hours of Idleness* in June, 1807. But there is a further history connected with this book of poems. It was noticed favourably enough in most of the critical reviews of the period. But *The Edinburgh Review*, a budding Whig organ, then just entering

into fame, could not miss this opportunity of thrashing a young lordling ; and in January 1808, there was an article by Brougham which made havoc of the poet's first performances and held them up to open ridicule.

But Byron was not a man to sit quiet under contempt. The *Edinburgh* review was just the sort of fillip that was necessary to brace up his energies and to kindle his latent poetic powers to flame. He had already been writing a variety of skits upon British bards. He now strung them together, flung in a few bitter lines on Scotch reviewers and published the whole thing under the title of *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*. The effect was instantaneous. People said that nothing better in the line of sarcasm had appeared since the time of Pope : we, in our soberer mood, may say at least that nothing better had appeared since the time of Churchill. What is more, Byron had had his first taste of revenge and popular applause ; and henceforth a patient hearing, if not a cordial reception, was assured for him.

Travels : Childe Harold

But a new chapter in Byron's life was now opening. He left Cambridge without a degree in 1808 and almost immediately afterwards entered upon his inheritance at Newstead. Newstead, as we have said before, was then in a ruined and dilapidated condition. But with its park, cascade and lucid lakes, its ruined chapels and choirs and all its historic and romantic associations, it was a fit and most romantic habitation for a poet. On Byron, at least, the charm of the place soon made a deep impression. He never lived for long at the abbey, but to the last he looked upon it with fond and affectionate remembrance.

In 1809, he came of age, took his seat in the House of Lords and almost immediately afterwards invited over a large party of friends to a house-warming at Newstead. The poet and his friends—all young and fresh from Cambridge—seemed to have lived in a roystering and most riotous fashion in the venerable old mansion. One of their

amusements seems to have been to masquerade as monks by night ; and to drink burgundy out of a human skull was considered a novel and a most piquant feat. However, the house-warming party soon broke up ; and on the 2nd of July, 1807, the poet started on a foreign tour accompanied by his friend Hobhouse and a small retinue of followers.

Upon the course of this voyage we need not dwell at any length here. Suffice it to say that after traversing Portugal and Spain, he started from Gibraltar on the 16th of August and landed at Prevesa on the Albanian coast on the 18th of September. From now till the beginning of 1811, a period of full one year and a half, Byron dwelt wholly in the East, travelling extensively about from place to place in the mainland of Greece and Turkey, crossing over to Asia Minor, visiting Ephesus and the Troad, and seeking and encountering many strange adventures by the way. At last in April, 1811, he set sail from Athens, spent a few weeks at Malta returning to England on the 20th of July.

The voyage, besides forming a romantic episode in Byron's life, was very fruitful from a literary point of view. Not to speak of the *Curse of Minerva* and *Hints from Horace*, it led directly to the composition of his first literary work of any excellence—we mean the first two cantos of *Childe Harold*. Byron seems to have been diffident about the success of this latter work. But the public had keener discernment than the poet; and they welcomed the appearance of the poem with rapture. Its success was instantaneous and complete and Byron's poetic reputation was established beyond dispute.

It may be noticed that there was an alloy of bitterness in the cup of the poet's success. Wingfield and Edleston, two of the poet's closest personal friends, died during his absence ; and his mother, sadder still, died after his return but before he could see her. However, all this happened before the poet's success came like a wide avalanche upon him ; and it may be surmised that he forgot a portion of his grief in the first flush of his gorgeous success.

Stay in London ; the Romances.

A new, strange, perilous and eventful chapter now opens in the life of the poet—a chapter in which there is much that is evil and little that is positively good.

He came to England in July 1811 and left the country finally in April 1816—5 short years and yet how crowded with glory and shame, with triumphant applause and foul-mouthed obloquy, with glorious poetic success yet mixed with low intrigue, coarse dissipation and scandal, misery and disgrace.

He began well, perhaps too well. The success of Childe Harold coupled perhaps with the success of his first political speech in the Lords, opened the doors of all London drawing-rooms to the poet. To use the expressive phrase of Kean, Society "rose at him" and welcomed him with thunderous applause. But even this success proved his ruin. The poet's personal beauty and poetic fame, together with the facile virtue of London ladies, made the descent to Avernus evtremely easy and rapid for him. Amour succeeded amour with almost bewildering quickness. Caroline Lamb, Lady Oxford, Lady Francis Webster —what would be the use of cataloguing his temptresses and victims? Suffice it to say that his hands were full ; and that these various intrigues left him little leisure even if he had the inclination to follow a political career.

But his pen was not idle ; on the other hand his literary activity, if anything, was only too copious. *Giaour*, *The Bride of Abydos*, *Corsair*, *Lara*, *Parisina*, and the *Siege of Corinth* all were published in the three years between 1813 and 1816. Some of these were dashed off in a week or ten days, in the intervals of bouts of drunkeness and dissipation : and it must be confessed that in spite of the energy of their passion and versification, most of them are flimsy enough. But there was no doubt about their immediate success. Fleet Street would be impassable with carriages on the day of their publication ; 13,000 copies of the *Corsair*

were sold in a day. Such success was phenomenal, bewildering; and it speaks well for Byron's sanity of understanding that he rated it at its true worth and was never carried off his feet by it

In the meantime another event of the first and most far-reaching importance happened in the poet's life. He married, perhaps because his wife was an heiress, perhaps because he thought that marriage would make him respectable. In any case he married, and married that most ununlovely and unloveable of all persons—a blue-stocking and a prude. Lady Byron (she was a Miss Milbank formerly) might be the embodiment of all the virtues; but she was cold by temperament and training and possessed that sort of frigid and self-satisfied virtue which is more irritating than down-right wickedness. The marriage, anyway, proved a failure. Fletcher, Byron's valet, used to say "I never knew a woman who could not manage my master except my lady." And indeed Lady Byron, besides being stiff and rigid and pompous, must have also been a singularly tactless person. The marriage took place on the 2nd of January 1815; a child, a daughter, was born in the second week of December of the same year; and then, on the 15th of January, Lady Byron left her husband's house, never again to return. What the precise cause of the separation might be, there is now no means of ascertaining. But it is useless concealing facts which are public property, more or less. Long years after Byron's death, an American authoress, Mrs. Beecher Stowe, known to fame as the author of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, first gave to the world the horrible story that Byron had been guilty of incest with his half-sister Mrs. Leigh; that Lady Byron had expressly stated the fact to herself; and that it was this which had led to their separation. The world, avid of scandals, readily lent its ear to the story; but as against its veracity and credibility, certain facts must be borne in mind. (1) Nothing had been said about it, so long as Byron was alive or in fact anybody who would be in a position to refute it. (2) Also, Lady Byron wrote many letters to Mrs. Leigh both before and after the separation; and the tone of these letters is utterly inconsistent with any suspicion of,

far less any belief in, the guilt of the poet. The first objection may be explained away ; but it seems to be impossible to get over the second.

Separation between husband and wife, even separation on the ground of adultery, is nothing new in English Society. But the British public, as Macaulay has put it with keen sarcasm, was passing just then through one of its periodic fits of morality. Besides, Byron had been the idol of this Society too long ; and so, it was anxious to avail itself of any excuse which might enable it to turn round upon its former favourite and rend him to pieces. The howl that was raised against Byron, therefore, was as unjust as it was loud and blatant. The poet was told that it would be unsafe for him to show himself at the theatre or at social functions ; and an actress, supposed to be intimate with Byron, was hooted off form the stage. Besides, Byron was supposed to be pro-Gallican, and political passion intensified the popular feeling against him. Baffled, bewildered and puzzled at the sudden and seemingly inexplicable change of front on the part of the public, the poet decided upon leaving the country. The deed of separation between him and his wife was signed on the 18th of April ; and on the 25th, he sailed from Dover for Ostend. Whether the separation was originally intended to be final or not does not appear ; but so, in effect, it proved to be ; and the poet kicked off the dust of his native shores to find fresh poetic inspiration in the arrowy Rhone and beneath the azure skies of Italy.

"In Journeyings Oft"

Byron was now an Ishmaelite, a homeless wanderer on the face of the earth. Of the last year of his life, the year spent in Greece, we shall speak afterwards. But the 7 years from 1816 to 1823—from his leaving England for Italy to his leaving Italy for Greece—were spent in endless and constant travelling. From Geneva to Venice, from Venice to Ravenna, thence to Genoa, Milan, Pisa, the poet could never lodge himself permanently anywhere. It is a serious

thing to uproot oneself from one's home and fatherland and so Byron found it to his cost. He could never strike root anywhere; some demon of unrest still urged him onward and drove him to seek consolation, now in low dissipation, now in vulgar amours, anon in vehement physical exercise or in taking part in some abortive revolutionary ferment; for now, as always, Byron was true to his description of himself—he was of the opposition. But, vexed and restless as they were, these were also the great years of Byron. They were the years of the last two cantos of Childe Harold, of *Beppo* and the *Vision of Judgment* and above all of *Don Juan*—poems which laid his reputation broad and deep, unassailable any longer by spite, impervious also to the attacks of time. And it was here that he took his revenge upon the British public: they had driven him off from their midst but they could not forbear reading his works; and he took an ever-deepening delight in shocking the petty, narrow, false and artificial conventionalities of English Society, in exposing the infinite cant and Pecksniffism of that society and in holding up to the light the black vices which stained and ate into its heart.

But to come to details. Crossing over to the Continent he settled first at Geneva, fell in with the Shelleys there, made excursions in their company in the surrounding places and finished the *Prisoner of Chillon* and the Third Canto of *Childe Harold*.

Next, by way of Milan and Verona, he reached Venice; and here he pitched his tent for some considerable time—in fact for three years, more or less, though of course, during this period he took also long excursions abroad. It cannot be denied that Venice laid a great fascination upon him; it cannot also be denied that during the first period of his stay here, he devoted himself deliberately to a life of low profligacy. As witness of the former, we have the Venetian dramas; as witness of the latter, we have his own account of his various *liasions*—one with Mariana Segati, the wife of his landlord, another, with Margarita Cogni, the wife of a baker, and, descending lower still, with the common wearers of the fazzioli in Venice.

From this life of riotous self-indulgence, Byron was saved by the one pure passion of his life—*viz.* his love for Theresa, Countess Guiccioli. People might object that Guiccioli was a married woman: and so she was But young, impressionable, at 19 she was married to a man sixty years of age; and that perhaps was her excuse, if it is reckoned one. In any case, in the spring of 1819, she met Byron and fell violently in love with him. Her love was returned; and after a certain amount of worry and trouble at the beginning, Byron was tacitly recognized by all as her *cavalier serviente*—almost a legitimate person in Italian Society. He followed her to Ravenna in the end of 1819 and thenceforward remained constant to her till death. And so, the blackest chapter in Byron's life here finally comes to an end.

Meanwhile, Byron and the Gambas (the people of La Guiccioli) became involved in the revolutionary activities of Italy; and so, under pressure from the Austrian Government, the Gambas had to move on to Pisa in June 1801 and Byron followed them there. But even here they were not allowed to live in quiet; and so, in September 1822, they left fer Genoa Life in Genoa was uneventful; and it was here, in 1828, that Byron learned that he had been appointed a member of the Greek Committee—a small body of influential Liberals, who had taken up the cause of the liberation of Greece. Byron promptly threw himself into the cause; offered money and advice; and after some hesitation determined to go to Greece. As we have said before, the seven years of the stay in Italy were the greatest and most fruitful period of Byron's poetic production. But a fuller notice of the value of this poetry will be found later on.

Messolonghi.

Byron sailed from Leghorn in July 1823 and reached Cepholonia on the 3rd of August. He had hoped to be in the thick of the fight at once and to die fighting for Greece —thus by one supreme act of self-sacrifice redeeming the many failures of his life. But the fates were against him.

Nothing in Greece was ready; and the people were quarrelling among themselves—the aristocrats under Mavrocordato being at loggerheads with the democarts under Odysseus. Recognising Mavrocordato as the champion and authorized leadec of the Greeks, Byron accepted the offer made by him and landed at Messolonghi in January 1824. Only three month more of life were left to him. But they were months of glorious endeavour. He toiled incessantly to bring about co-operation between the different sections of the people and to train the levies placed under his command into some sort of order and discipline. Labour, industry, money, he spared nothing in the cause of Greece; but the Fates would not grant him the wish of his life. Incessant toil wore him down; and this and a certain reckless disregard of life brought on a violent fit of ague on the 9th of April. He sank rapidly; and on the 19th of April, among the marshes of Messolonghi, far from home and friend, this vexed and unquiet spirit was laid at length at rest. "*Implora Pace*—put these words upon my tomb when I am dead"—so he had said long years before; and the peace which was denied him in life, he found it at last in his grave.

Last Words

It would serve no useful purpose to moralise on Byron's death. "Rest, rest perturbed spirit" is all that we can say. Still his life was so strange, his career of such meteoric shortness and splendour, that it naturally invites and almost compels discussion.

It must be confessed, then, that Byron, to use an expressive colloquialism, made a bad job of his life. Youth, beauty, transcendent powers, he had it all; and yet he was miserable and unhappy—heart-worn with disappointment and sick of life before he was forty. No doubt, to a certain extent, great literary artists, great poets above all, are bound to be unhappy; their sensitive and responsive souls throb with keen anguish at all the misery and wretchedness of which human life is so full. The sorrow of the

whole world sits like a heavy burden upon them and crushes them down with its weary weight. They may be young in years but are old in suffering, worn with the age-long sorrow of this ancient universe. But Byron's was not this sympathetic, responsive sorrow of the poet and artist. It was the stormful and tumultuous rage of the supreme egoist baffled in his pride and crossed in his passions. Pride and passion—these were the ruling principles of his nature; and he had never learned to govern his temper Perhaps it was more his misfortune than his fault that it should be so He had had a bad ancestry and a bad up-bringing; and the society of his day, the fashionable society of which he was a member by right of birth, was the bad, artificial and thoroughly dissolute society of the Regency. And so he spent the finest years of his life in a round of vapid dissipation or of low, miserable intrigue, which ought to have been revolting to the finer moral sense of the true artist. And it is a tribute to the energy of his genius and the fertility of his intellect that, in spite of these wasting and corroding influences, he has left us so much that is good and strong and true.

Byron's life has been made a peg upon which to hang many moral homilies and from which, as from a point of vantage, to give warning to the young and unwary. It would be ungracious for us to follow in the same beaten track. Let us grant at once that he had many follies, faults and errors in his character, that he stood knee-deep in the slough and mire of the world. that he was bright gold tarnished with the smirch and dirt of sin. Yet, let us never forget that at bottom he was pure and genuine gold, yea, gold thrice tested in fire. He was ever the friend of the weak and oppressed, ever the foe of the strong and the unjust. He was generous also—generous both in his moral and literary judgments; and his charity was unbounded. Perhaps he was never what we should call rich; yet, in Italy, he regularly spent a thousand pounds a year in charity; and later, in Greece, he lavished his fortune in befriending the cause of Liberty In fact, the virtues and vices of the poet were all the virtues and vices of a passionate, impetuous personality.

Perhaps the chief fault of the poet's character was the vein of insincerity which ran through it and which made it appear as if he was posing and acting a part all through his life. This may seem strange, in view of the many strange confessions we have from the poet. No doubt, Byron was candid, perhaps brutally candid—out-spoken with regard to many of those peccadillos, great or small, of which a finer nature would be ashamed. But was he genuine? Was he sincere? The question goes deep—it touches not simply his acts and expressions but also his thoughts and feelings, and the answer must be doubtful, to say the least. Byron was morbidly self-conscious; and self-consciousness always militates against perfect sincerity. He set out in life determined to play a part—the part of a man, gloomy, self-absorbed, eaten up with some secret woe and remorse, a man sick, cynical and soured against the world. It was a wholly gratuitous part to play; for, in the beginning, at any rate, the world, instead of ill-treating him, had treated him only too well; in fact, it had rather petted and spoilt him than otherwise. But once he had chosen the part he wanted to play, the character gradually grew into him; he seemed to have fallen in love with the pose and it remained with him till the end. And then came the change in his fortunes—separation from wife, banishment from home, the loud and many-tongued obloquy of a petty and spiteful world. This completed the work which had already begun, and Byron ended by becoming what at first he had only affected to be.

A wild and turbid personality, the play-thing of fortune and his own character, buffeted by the eddies and cross-currents of his own passions and the adverse winds and tides of the world, a man who erred greatly and sought greatly to make up for it—one to whom Nature had been prodigal of all gifts, and who had lavished them most prodigally—such must be the sorrowful and half-puzzled verdict of posterity upon Byron's strange and meteoric career.

II

BYRON AS A POET

1. Classical and Romantic Poetry

It has become almost a commonplace of literary criticism to draw an elaborate distinction between 'Classical' and 'Romantic' poetry. One must do so, more specially, if one is dealing with poets like Wordsworth, Shelley, Keats, Coleridge, Byron and Scott. It is customary to call these poets 'romantic' poets and their poetry '*romantic*' poetry and to distinguish such poetry from the so-called *Classical* poetry of men like Pope, Dryden, Addison and the other poets and poetlings of the 18th Century. I do not believe in the distinction myself; still it has become the fashion to make the distinction and I must pay my tribute to custom.

Not that the distinction does not exist; it exists sure enough; only it does not apply to English poetry. The poetry of Wordsworth, † Coleridge, Scott or Byron may rightly enough be called *Romantic* poetry; but there has never been any clearly marked or well-developed Classical poetry in English literature; and it would be a misnomer to apply the term to the cold, correct, formal and pedantic poetry of Pope, Addison or Johnson.

It may be asked—wherein consists the difference between Romantic and Classical poetry? The difference,

For a fuller and more detailed treatment of the subject, see my Introduction to 'The English Poets of the 18th Century.'

† We have called Wordsworth's poetry romantic; perhaps it would be fitter to call it classical. In fact, it stands always on the borderland of classical poetry, while the poetry of Shelley and Keats, of Victor Hugo and Alfred de Musset in France and of Manzoni in Italy would be regarded as type and specimen of romantic poetry.

it may be said, is one of method and treatment. The classical poet cares more for the 'thing,' the object as it stands whether it be a fact of Nature or an incident of human life; the Romantic poet cares more for the emotion to be derived from the thing. *Intensity of subjective emotion*—that is the characteristic of Romantic poetry; while '*massive faithfulness of objective presentation*'—that is the characteristic of classical poetry. The Romantic poet is enraptured and ecstatical; he is carried out of himself; he seeks to draw out and enjoy all the emotional possibilities that are latent in all the facts and features of the world; he revels in mystic suggestion of the fine nimbus of emotional of richness which surrounds even the most prosaic details of life and nature. The classical poet is sure-footed and self-centred; he is content to hold up before us things as they are and he leaves it to us to derive from them what lesson of emotion or intellect we can. But these kinds of poetry are great; in fact, taking mere names into account, Classical poetry has been greater than Romantic. Homer, Dante, Milton, all the great epic poets of the world have been classical, while Goethe is the star of largest magnitude whom we can name among the Romanticists.

Judging now by the standard we have indicated above, it may surely be said that it would be a total misnomer to apply the term 'classical' to the poetry of the 18th Century. That poetry is great in no sense of the term: it is distinguished neither by depth and fervour of emotion nor by fidelity to fact. Its characteristic is negative, devoid of colour. It is false, artificial, formal and cold: it never strikes the imagination, it never rouses the heart. With Pope in mind, we cannot call it flat and dull; but the brilliancy which it achieved was a meretricious brilliancy—a brilliancy which sprang from bitterness of personal spite and malignity. Once it was the fashion to call this poetry 'correct.' 'Waller,' Pope tells us, 'was correct.' Johnson repeats the maxim and says that Shakespeare and Milton, Chaucer and Spenser were *incorrect*. We at the present day fail to understand what was the nature of this correctness which Waller possessed and Shakepeare did not possess. The poetry of Pope was correct in the sense that

it was grammatically correct; perhaps also its 'prosody' was correct; but it was correct in no profounder or more recondite sense.

Against this lifeless and soulless poetry of the 18th Century, a reaction was bound to come. It came, faintly and half-heartedly with Crabbe and Cowper; it came in the full tide of glory and strength with Wordsworth and Coleridge; and Byron was one of the first fruits of this reaction.

2. Was Byron a Romantic Poet?

We have said that Byron was one of the first fruits of the reaction—viz. the reaction towards *romanticism*. But he was a rebel among *romanticists*: he was a romantic poet despite of himself. He was the sworn enemy of men like Wordsworth and Coleridge and never failed to shower boisterous and irreverent ridicule upon them; and he was the sworn champion of Pope and his school. Byron had a controversy—a childish affair—with a Rev. Mr. Bowles—Tommy Bowles, Byron calls him in his letter—a sort of minor poet in his day. The expressions of praise which he applies to Pope and his 'ilk' in the course of this controversy are amazing in their extravagance. "Neither time nor distance, nor age nor sorrow," he says, speaking of Pope, "can ever diminish my veneration for him who is the great moral poet of all times...Your whole generation are not worth a canto of the *Dunciad* or anything that is his." Pope's poetry is a 'Greecian temple' he says elsewhere and he hints that the moderns were engaged in defacing that temple.

This extravagant estimate of Pope and his party and this extravagant dis-estimate of the poetry of himself and his contemporaries is but another instance of those contradictions we may notice in the outer details of Byron's life as well as in his work and character. He was handsome like Apollo and cursed with a club-foot; the inheritor of a noble name and of an empty exchequer; an aristocrat by

birth and a democrat by tendencies; a man of the sweetest and most loveable disposition by nature and yet haunted with a mania for appearing sour and cynical. And as it was in life, so was it with his literary judgment and literary practice. No one aired more absurd views and theories about literature, and no one violated these theories more gloriously in practice.

Macaulay has said that "personal taste led him to the 18th Century, thirst for praise to the 19th." Like all Macaulay's literary judgments, this also is unmeaning and of little worth. A poet is something different from a mechanical versifier; he *must* write out according to his real nature i.e., according to his personal taste; his genius will compel him to do so. If therefore Byron's personal taste had really inclined him to the 18th century, he would have written after the manner of the 18th century as he actually did in "The English Bards" and still more in the "Hints from Horace." But a surer, wiser and truer instinct, his *real* personal taste, led him to abandon this track and to give full vent to the wild and impetuous promptings of his nature. And hence we get from him some of the most forceful and eloquent 'Romantic' poetry of the time.

In fact it could not be otherwise. Byron was a born rebel: he had the instinct of the *Jacobin* in him; he was always spoiling for a fight. "I am of the opposition" he once said and truly said. Whatever the established order of things might be, he was bound to run counter to it. And so this ingrained *jacobinism* of nature, if nothing else, would have made him rebel against all formal canons and codes of literary criticism i. e. would have made him a romanticist in spite of himself.

3. Changes in the Literary Fortunes of Byron

Byron's poetical reputation has passed through many varieties of being and has always been of a rather mixed kind. In his day looked upon with dread and suspicion by a few and indeed almost banned and interdicted by the bigoted intolerence of hypocritical zeal, his poetry was yet read with

passionate admiration by the general public and himself he was idolised by the ardent hero-worship of the young We read how Tennyson, then a lad of fifteen, was deeply affected by the news of the poet's death and how he wrote upon the sands "Byron is dead"—as if the light and life of the world had passed away with the death of the poet. This even in bigoted, intolerant, truth-hating, hypocritical England, the England of the early 19th Century; while on the continent the name of Byron was a passion and a craze. The passion of his poetry together with the passion of his character cast a glamour of romance round his name which took the literary world of Europe as with storm. Even Goethe—sage, serene, Olympian Goethe—was not proof against the fascination. "A character of such eminence" he said "has never existed before and probably will never again.....He is undoubtedly the greatest genius of our century."—Byron himself was not unconscious of the deep and strong hold which his poetry had taken over the popular imagination. In the half-mocking verses of Don Juan—in which nevertheless there is an undercurrent of serious suggestion—he says:

> "Even I—albeit I am sure I did not know it,
> Nor sought of foolscap subjects to be king,—
> Was reckon'd, a considerable time,
> The grand Napoleon of the realms of rhyme."

—But then came the reaction; it came early, it came swiftly and for a time it was complete. The greatest literary influence in England between 1840 and 1880 was that of Carlyle; and that influence was steadily and persistently directed against Byron. "Close thy Byron and open thy Goethe"—was the persistent refrain of all the bitter and eloquent preaching of Carlyle's strongest years, and so long as vigour of denunciation lasted, he never ceased to inveigle against that "false Byronism of taste" which he suspected was eating into the vitals of the modern age. Anyhow, what because of the influence of Carlyle and what with the slo

Mr. Mathew Arnold would have it that Goethe used the word talent and not 'genius.' But his objection seems to be captious and unfounded.

changing tendencies of thought and taste, the influence of Byron steadily declined, till in the seventies and eighties it became the fashion to look down upon Byron as an affected sentimentalist and an idle if eloquent versifier.

It may be doubted if we have yet fully emerged from this period of reaction; the poetic reputation of Byron is still passing through a waning phase. Other gods have arisen who claim the homage of the dawning years. Swinburne and "Omar Khayyam" have each had their brief span of sovereignty and the star of Mr Masefield seems now to be in the ascendant. But leaving these literary caprices of the hour aside, few today would claim for Byron a place higher than that of Wowdsworth and Shelley among his contemporaries or that of Browning among his successors; while Keats and Tennyson would both prove formidable competitors in the race. Still the nadir has been reached and passed: the worst that can be said about Byron has already been said; and if the verdict of the present day upon Byron is revised in future, the revision may enhance the poet's glory, it will certainly not detract from it. So much being said by way of preface, it may be permitted to us to give some brief indication of what we take to be the main features of Byron's poetical work.

4. Chief Features of Byron's Poetry

It seems easier to speak of what Byron was not than to say what he was; to proceed by way of negatives than by way of affirmatives.

1. Want of narrative power.

In the first place, then, it may be said that Byron had no gifts at story-telling. This seems almost incredible in face of the numerous stories that he has told; but the fact seems to be indubitable and in fact is never seriously disputed. As we have said before, Byron has given us many stories: *Lara*, *Parisina*, *The Bride of Abydos*, *The Siege of Corinth*, *The Island*, *The Corsair* and in fact a whole host of them. It may be asked—"a man who had no genuine instinct for story-telling within

him—why should he flood us with so many tales?" The answer is that tale-writing was then in fashion and Byron wanted to swim with the current. Scott had set the fashion with his brilliant novelettes in verse and Byron followed suit. Only Scott gave us the manners, customs, incidents of those middle ages which he loved so well, while Byron introduced the Englishman of his time to the strange and mysterious wonder-land of the East. And the effect was overwhelming. For a time it almost seemed as if Byron had outrun Scott in his own special field; and in fact Scott gave up writing poetry and turned to novels remarking, with the sunny geniality of his nature, that in verse Byron had *bet* him. But in this, posterity has woefully reversed the judgment of contemporaries. Scott's stories are even now eagarly read by thousands; while, who ever cares to read the oriental tales of Byron? The reason is obvious. Byron is totally deficient in that healthy humanity of interest, that genial insight into character, that zest and relish in the narration of stirring tales of adventure which are so eminently characteristic of Scott; and hence that total lack of interest which people now evince in the tales of the former.

2 Want of dramatic power.

And just as Byron was deficient in narrative power, so he was deficient in dramatic power also. Yet strangely enough, Byron has written quite a number of dramas—*Marino Faliero*, *The Two Foscari*, *Sardanapalus*. *The Deformed Transformed*, *Cain*, and others too numerous to mention. Some of these dramas again, notably the witch-drama' of Manfred, contain bursts and snatches of magnificent poetry. But as dramas, their failure is total and unmitigated; they are wooden; they do not move; and that clash and interplay of passion and character which is the soul of dramatic writing, we miss it altogether. Byron has never been able to give us even one piece of sustained dialogue: his dialogues are soliloquies strung together to make up a sort of artificial whole. In fact, insight into character—sympathy with a wide range of thought, tendencies and passions, ablity to embody these in individual human personalities and to project these personalities upon canvas—the power wherein consists the essence of dramatization—Byron did not possess it in the least. The defect

was due to a defect in his own nature and character. Byron could never get rid of his own shadow ; he was haunted by his own character—a man morbidly self-possessed. Whatever he saw, he saw through the medium of his own distorting personality. Hence, all the characters he sought to create were but reflections—sometimes distorted and exaggerated reflections—of his own self and character. It is as if a man to sit in a room walled and lined with mirrors ; and each facet of every mirror were to return a reflection—grinning, ghastly, diabolic, fantastic or even merely natural—of his own physiognomy. So in all these dramas of Byron, in fact in all his works where he introduces human character at all, it is the poet who speaks to us through a thousand masks and in a thousand various shapes. Chide Harold is Byron. Don Juan is Byron ; Lara, Parisina, the Corsair, Manfred, even Saradanapalus —all, all are Byron—now moody, wrapt in gloom, eager to fly his own shadow, now mocking, cynical, sensual, with a careless, dare.devil gaiety in his heart and now roaming swiftly over the waves—an enemy of gods and men :—but in all moods alike bitter, cynical, self-weary and world-weary.

3. Faulty workmanship

So far about faults of substance ; but there are serious faults of workmanship also. In fact, Byron was singularly deficient in that untiring effort after flawless perfection of verse which is the crown and glory of Milton's poetical work. His ear was not delicate ; his verse is often faulty ; his rhymes are sometimes forced ; and his grammar frequently leaves much to be desired. Instances may be quoted at random—as in the famous beginning of the third canto of Chide Harold——' 'Awaking with a start' the waters heave around me." With reference to this line, it has been asked "who awakes ? The poet or the waters ?

Again, in the famous address to the ocean, we have that 'crying anacoluthon' as Mathew Arnold calls it.

"There let him lay."

As an instance of almost barbarous rhythm, we can quote the lines—

"All shall be void
Destroyed !"

And the way in which words have been twisted and tortured into rhyme in Don Juan (*Poet* with it, *poet*'s with *it*'s' *small* with *numeral* and *Cambell* with *ramble* is almost fearful and wonderful to contemplate. But here the cleverness with which the verse has been manipulated and the careless and prodigal ease with which the poet has hitched all things under Heaven into rhyme make up and more than make up for such defects as these.

To multiply instances would be useless. It must be confessed that Byron's work was slovenly—"rapid and slovenly" as Prof. John Nichol calls it. His colours are crude and he lays on his paint thick ; and he has nothing of that marvellous delicacy of craftsmanship which is a never-ending source of delight in Keats. And if Byron's work has fallen into comparative neglect at this day, this want of artistic excellence in execution must be held largely responsible for it.

There is another defect of form in Byron's poetry—a defect which passes for merit—*viz.*, his tendency towards rhetorical declamation. Byron is a favourite for purposes of recitation ; and it is this declamatory strain in poetry which makes him such a favourite. And yet the reader must have to distinguish—not that the task of distinction is easy—between the accent of true poetry and the accent of false rhetoric.

4. Tendency to rhetoric

Take for instance, the description of *Waterloo* in the third canto of Childe Harold.

"There was a sound of revelry by night"—

We begin and we read on through the full-pulsed, slow-rolling verses till we come to the dramatic climax of the whole.

"Nearer, clearer, deadlier than before
Arm, arm, it is, it is the canon's opening roar."

It is grand, you say: and so it is: only it is the grandeur of eloquence and not of poetry, the grandeur of superb and full-blooded rhetoric and not the mysterious and haunting allusiveness of true poetry. True poetry does not lay on its colour so thick, does not speak so loud, is not so crude, if we may say so in one word—perhaps even it is so obviously striking. But it sinks into the heart with a strange impressiveness: and once there, it nestles and twines round the fibres of the heart so as never to be dislodged or shaken off from there. The accent of such true poetry is in Keats, when he says—

"O give me their old vigour, and unheard
Save of the quiet primrose, and the span
Of heaven, and few years.
Rounded by thee, my song should die away,
Content as theirs,
Rich in the simple worship of a day.

in Wordsworth, when he says—

"Perhaps the plaintive numbers flow
For old, unhappy, far off things and battles long ago,

Also in Byron, when he speaks of

"the solitude
Of the pine-forest, and the silent shore
Which bound Ravenna's immemorial wood."

Of verse of this supreme, this magical quality, Byron has too few: but the world itself has too few of such verses.—Of Byron's ordinary style of verse, in all its strength and weakness, the following is a fair sample.

"A king sate on the rocky brow
Which looks o'er sea-born Salamis;
And ships, by thousands, lay below
And men in nations:—all were his!
He counted them at break of day,
And when the sun set, ah! where were they?

This is eloquent; but still there is something of clap-trap, something of the cheap gesture of the rhetorician in it: and it is redeemed from being common-place by the poet's genuine, whole-hearted passion for liberty.

In a somewhat higher style is the following:

"The mountains look on Marathon
And Marathon looks on the sea;
And musing there an hour alone
I dreamed that Greece might still be free.

Again we repeat, that this is great: only it is the greatness of superb eloquence, not of superb poetry.

5. Sentimentalism.

Another and more serious defect of his poetry—a defect not of form but of substance—was the false sentimentalism which disfigured so much of his work. Sentimentalism is not emotion—it is the disease of emotion: it is selfish, subjective and false, while emotion is objective, sincere and pure. It is the heart musing and turning over an emotion, not because it feels it really but rather for the sake of the effect it may produce or for the pleasure which it may bring. This sentimentalism—*Wertherism* as Carlyle has called it—we find most noticeable in the shorter tales of Byron; far less frequently in the greater works—very rarely in Childe Harold and almost never in Don Juan.

6. Affectation.

Another serious defect, closely allied with the former one and perhaps forming the source of it, is the affectation which he could never altogether shake off. This vice of affectation was ingrained in the very nature of the man and sprang from that acute and morbid self-consciousness which obsessed him through life. He could never forget that he was expected to play a prominent part on the stage of life and that the eyes of the whole gallery were fixed full upon him. Hence, in life as in poetry, we always find him playing a part; we almost catch him as if attitudinizing before a mirror. He began life as a *poseur* and he remained a *poseur* through the large part of it. And the pose he most

affected was that of the soured and crynical misanthrope—one who had tasted all the pleasures and almost all the vices of the world and upon whose jaded palate, pleasures and vices alike had palled—of one who had given much to the world and received but little form it—of one who had tasted the fickleness of love, the treachery of friendship, the ingratitude of the world and the vanity and futility of all human joy and delight. In almost all his poems, the central figure is a hero who is out of love with life, who is dark, gloomy, sullen, and self-centred, who loathes the past and dreads the future and for whom death is a welcome release from life; and we are almost obtrusively asked by the poet to identify this dark and mysterious figure with himself. And yet nothing could be a more misleading picture of Byron as he actually was. And this affectation of character reacted most unfavourably upon his poetry. True greatness, in poetry as in life, must be based upon a deep and abiding sincerity—sincerity in feeling as well as sincerity in expression; and we are never quite sure that Byron is sincere—except occasionally, when he is filled and inspired with that passion for freedom which is the redeeming feature of so much of his poetry and also in those verses of rollicking, dare-devil sarcasm which surprise us ever and anon in Don Juan.

We have given a long catalogue of Byron's faults; and we have deprecated the fascination which Byron casts over all young and impressionable hearts But we must plead guilty to being slaves of that fascination ourselves; and it would be foolish and captious criticism which would be blind to the real strength and greatness of Byron's poetry.

1. Deep-seated hatred of humbug

In the first place, then, we may note one striking feature of Byron's poetry and that is his whole-souled contempt for all false affectation of virtue, for humbug and hypocrisy in all its shapes. Hypocrisy has been called the master-vice of England—a genuine Anglo-Saxon article; and even Macaulay, Anglo-Saxon to the core of his heart, speaks of the periodic

fits of morality which come upon the English people from time to time. It is seldom that Macaulay is worth quoting: his literary criticism is valueless; his general observations are common-place and almost puerile But his remarks on Anglo-Saxon morality come patto the purpose; and we can hardly resist the temptation of quoting them in full.

"We know no spectacle so ridiculous," says Macaulay, "as the British public in one of its *periodic fits of morality*. In general, elopements, divorces and family quarrels pass with little notice. We read the scandal, talk about it for a day, and forget it. *But once in six or seven years our virtue becomes outrageous.* Accordingly the unfortunate man, in no respect more depraved than hundreds whose offences have been treated with lenity, is singled out as an expiatory sacrifice. If he has children, they are to be taken from him. If he has a profession, he is to be driven from it. He is cut by the higher orders and hissed by the lower. We reflect very complacently on our severity and compare with great pride our superior virtue with Parisian laxity. At length our anger is satiated. Our victim is ruined and heart-broken. And *our virtue goes quietly to sleep for seven years more.*

And against this peculiarly British vice, the vice of the Anglo-Saxon people, Byron never ceased to shoot the barbed shafts of his venomous satire. Indeed this was one reason for the virulent hostility with which Byron was followed in life by one section of the English public. By them he was regarded as the incarnation of all evil, the founder of the Satanic School, as Southey called him with a feeble and ghastly effort at satire. But whatever its effect upon Byron's contemporary reputation might be, there is no denying the fact that his whole-hearted contempt for hypocrisy, his desire to look facts in the face and not to mince matters or to garble the truth, has lent an element of strength and truth to his poetry without which its chances of permanent duration would be far less than they are. No doubt, contempt for false prudery and affectation of outward seemliness led him at times to an opposite extreme; it led him to a broadness and coarseness of speech which

stood sometimes on the perilous border-land of indecency and even perhaps crossed the boundary-line and that on the wrong side. This fact must be conceded ; but in spite of the concession the merit of being able to speak the truth must be pronounced to be considerable.

2 Great powers of sarcasm

Closely akin to his hatred of hypocrisy, and issuing directly out of it, was the very considerable power of sarcasm which he possessed. It is quite safe to say that he was the greatest satirist of England after the time of Pope. But he was something more than that. His powers, even of sarcasm, were wider and more varied than those of Pope ; and yet at the same time, his satire was purer in motive and less interested in tone. But we must add that this remark has to be taken with a certain amount of caution. There is nothing in Byron quite so brilliant, quite so incisive, quite so mordant in its pitiless ferocity of invective as, say, the lines on Atticus or the virulent diatribe against Sporus. But the reason for the difference is to be sought in the differing characters of the two, Byron had nothing of that deep-seated personal malignity of nature which was perhaps the most salient feature of Pope's character and which lent point, pungency and virus to his satires and lampoons. Byron had reason to be angry with the Edinburgh Reviewers for their slashing and not altogether just review of his earliest poetic production. But still, even in the bitterest and most biting passage of *the English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*, there is little of hard, relentless, personal acrimony. There is much of youthful audacity and irreverence, some coarse and perhaps needless offensiveness specially in the remarks on the Lake School, but the whole is redeemed by a vein of rollicking good humour and mirth. The author evidently enjoyed heartily what he wrote ; and his victims also, specially the more manly and genial among them like Scott, never bore any grudge against him in later years for this mad escapade of his youth.

Perhaps Southey was the man against whom Byron was most severe—not altogether without cause ; and he never missed an opportunity of covering 'Bob Southey, poet' poet

laureate with boisterous ridicule. But though there is much of contempt in these verses, there is little of personal animus, and his greatest cause of anger against the ex-jacobin poet-laureate was his apostacy from his former political principles. *Renegade and turncoat* are the epithets which he applied most often against Southey and no one can deny that facts justified the use of the epithets.

It is in the *Vision of Judgment* that Byron's satiric humour has freest play; and this poem—a parody upon Southey's feeble and pompous poem of the same name—must undoubtedly be regarded as the greatest parody in English Literature. Satire forms also the ground-work of Byron's longest and perhaps greatest poem, *Don Juan*; but there with satire there is much else—passion, eloquence and pathos, the whole making up an altogether great and wonderful miscellany.

3. Genuine passion for liberty.

But the quality in Byron which appeals most to people is his noble passion for human liberty, his championship of lost hopes and forsaken causes. The cause of liberty ever found in him a friend and advocate, whether it was in Portugal, Spain or Greece; and his friendship extended beyond the writing of impassioned verses. He was staunch unto death: he laid down his life for the cause and thus atoned for a life of thwarted hopes and aimless projects.

In one of his most stirring and impassioned pieces, he asks—

> "What is left the poet here?
> For Greeks, a blush—for Greece a tear."

But with the very next breath, he checks himself and says—

> "Must we *but weep*—our fathers *bled*."

And at the fag-end of life, old at 36, jaded with the pleasures of the world, and sick of its vain hopes and vainer disappointments—this is what he proceeded to do.

We have said before that Byron was a Jacobin—a declared foe to all established institutions; a jacobin in literature and a jacobin in politics as well. He could never pardon Napoleon for aspiring to the "purple vest" of Empire and against tyranny of all sorts—whether it was the tyranny of the French over the Spaniards or of the Turks over the Greeks—his voice was ever loud and strong. Even now the apostrophes to liberty which we find in Byron are the most eloquent and moving of any in English Literature. And subject people as we are, claiming for our country some share in the vanished glories of a day that is gone, Byron's passionate laments over the faded splendour of Greece come home to our heart with a poignancy of personal sorrow, with a strange and bitter heart-pang, which English people cannot conceive.

4 Genuine love of Nature.

Lastly, as a genuine mark of Romantic poetry, we may notice that deep-seated love of Nature of which there are more abundant traces in *Childe Harold* than in any other work of Byron. Perhaps there is something of clap-trap in the oft-quoted lines—

"There is a pleasure in the pathless woods,
There is a rapture in the lonely shore,
There is Society where none intrudes
By the deep sea and music in its roar,
I love not *man* the *less* but *nature more*."

But if there is clap-trap in the lines, there is no clap-trap in the feeling which prompted them. Byron says someone. And he has all the highlander's passion for mountain scenery. Also he had played with the Ocean from when he was a child: and the passion for the sea endured. As we have said before, instance of this abiding love of nature are scattered freely in *Childe Harold*. Thus, we may notice the magnificent apostrophe to the Ocean with which the poem closes, also the stirring address to 'the castled crag of Drachenfals,' and also to the placid waves of Lake Leman.

In closing this brief and inadequate review of Byron's poetic character, we must notice again the one supreme

feature of his poetry *viz.*, the passionate strength of his feelings. He feels deeply and speaks strongly—not caring to pick and choose among his words when the inspiration is upon him, but pouring out a lava-flood of song with all the wild impetuosity of his heart.

III

CHILDE HAROLD

1. The Composition of the Third and Fourth Cantos

(Byron left Cambridge in 1808; came of age in 1809: and started on his travels almost immediately afterwards—returning home in July 1811 after an absence of more than two years)

The first two cantos of Childe Harold had been written during the course of these travels and were published in February 1812. It is curious to remember that the publication was almost due to an accident. With that perversity of literary judgment which always marked the poet, he thought much more highly of his wretched *Hints from Horace* than of the strong and glorious verse of *Childe Harold*; and on returning to England it was the former book which he placed for publication in the hands of a Cambridge friend, Robert Charles Dallas. Dallas disapproved of the stuff and asked: "Have you no other result of your travels?" "A lot of Spenserian Stanzas," was the poet's indifferent reply: "not worth troubling you with, but you are welcome to them." Dallas took him at his word, inspected the draft of the first two cantos of *Childe Harold*, saw the merits of the poem; and assumed to himself the risks of the publication *as also of the profits.*

Anyhow the book appeared on the 29th of February and the poet "woke up in the morning and found himself famous." The book was the rage of the season and Byron was the *lion* of fashionable society, at least for the time. The craze lasted for just three years—a barren and unprofitable period of Byron's life marked only by those most ephemeral of the poet's works—his eastern romances. But deliverence was at hand, though it came in the shape of

tragedy Byron married Miss Milbank in 1815 (January 2nd) : a child was born to them in December of the same year ; and *six weeks* after, Lady Byron left her husband never to join him again A howl of obloquy and shame burst at once upon the devoted head of the poet : even his stout heart quailed at the fury of the storm : and on April 25th, 1816, Byron embarked for Ostend, never more to return to England.

The escape from England came to Byron as a deliverence : it freed him from that bondage to the vapid whirl of fashionable life which had seriously impeded his literary work during the last five years and was perhaps slowly but surely sapping up the strength and wholesomeness of his poetic genius In any case, his literary output and the completion of *Childe Harold* was one of the first fruits of this renewed literary activity.

When precisely the composition of the third canto was taken up, we have no means of knowing ; but it had been evidently completed by June, 1816. Byron was detained for two days (June 26th, 27th) at Ouchy in Switzerland. It was here that he wrote *The Prisoner of Chillon* and it was from here also that he wrote to his publisher, Murrary, announcing the completion of the third canto of *Childe Harold.*

In the meantime Byron left Switzerland and started for Italy in October 1816. Passing by Milan and Verona he settled at Venice in November ; and from there set out on an expedition to Rome, arriving there in May by way of *Arqua, Ferrara and Florence.* By this time, the composition of the fourth canto was already well in hand : the poem was completed in September 1817 and published early in 1818 The book was dedicated to John Cam Hobhouse, one of the oldest and staunchest of Byron's friends, with whom Byron had made the journey from Switzerland to Italy and who supplied most of the illustrative notes to the third and fourth cantos.

The success of the book was immediate and great : it

could not well have been otherwise: yet, it may be interesting to notice that in the opinion of many of his contemporaries, the two last cantos had not quite reached the high level of the preceding portion—a perverse judgment entirely and one which has long been universally set aside.

Byron received four thousand pounds for the last two cantos of *Childe Harold*: the profits of the first two cantos, the student will remember, had been made over to the poet's friend, Dallas.

2. A Critical Appreciation of these Cantos

A wide gulf separates the two last cantos of *Childe Harold* from the preceding portion of the poem. The Spenserian stanza with its grave, slow-rolling melody is there; and so also, at least in the third canto—is the vague and elusive personality of Harold. In fact these are the only links which connect the two portions of the poem: but in all else they are signally different. Byron had gained greatly in the interval both in knowledge of life and in insight into nature; and the result of this increased knowledge and ripeness of judgment is apparent in the greater truth, intenser passion, and higher workmanship of the third and fourth cantos.

Coming to details, we may notice the following as the chief features of beauty in this latter portion of the poem.

1. Higher powers of description

Description, Byron used to say, was his forte; and there are noble specimens of descriptive power in the first and second cantos of *Childe Harold*. But the descriptions in the latter portion are altogether of a nobler kind; they are no longer merely geographical—concerned with the outer surface of scenery—they take us into the very heart of things. Nature is no longer merely objective to Byron. She has transmitted her own deathless passion to the poet and made him hers. Hence there is a note of sincerity and passion in the

description of Venice with her tiara of proud towers of the 'casted crag of Drachenfels,' of Italy with her fatal dower of beauty, and of the vanished glories of Rome, to which there is hardly a parallel in the confessedly immature work of the first two cantos.

But even in description, Byron is most at home—not where he is dealing with external Nature but where Nature is blended with historical associations that stir the deepest depths of memory. Hence the ringing eloquence of the verses on Waterloo and the noble pathos in the picture of the dying gladitor.

2. A temple of fame.

In fact, as Mr. Nichol has finely observed, these cantos are not merely a diorama of scenery; they are also A TEMPLE OF FAME. Byron has made every resting place of his pilgrimage, every land-mark of his journey, memorable by the association of historical and illustrious memories. "Coblenz introduces the tribute to Marceau; Leman a complete review of Rousseau in five verses; Arqua suggests Petrach; the grass-grown streets of Ferrara lead in the lines on Tasso; the white walls of Florence bring back Alfieri, Michael Angelo, Bocaccio and Dante: And as for Rome, Byron has mastered her glories so completely, has identified himself so closely with her spirit, has so entered into the mystery of her age-long woe and desolation that all else that may be said about them seems superfluous and profitless.

3. Sincerity and passion.

But beyond all else is the added strength and sincerity of these cantos. Byron has left his preatic—days long behind him; there is nothing of the amateur any longer in these cantos. In his verses he strikes now with his right hand and straight from the shoulder. As Mr. Nichol has said "Had Byron's life been closed when he left England, he would have been remembered for a generation as the author of a clever satire, a journal in verse exhibiting flashes of genius, and a series of fascinating romances." But

the third and fourth cantos placed him on another platform, among the "Dei Majores of English verse."

3. Analysis of the two Cantos

The structure of these two cantos like that of the preceding ones is exceedingly simple; and they may be easily analysed with reference to the landmarks of his pilgrimage —the places which he visited in the course of his journey and which he has consecrated in his verse.

Following this arrangement, we get *Waterloo*, the *Rhine* and *the Swiss Oberland* as the chief divisions of the *third canto* while in the *fourth canto*, the chief divisions would be *Venice*, *Arqua*, *Ferrara*, *Florence* and *Rome*. (A more detailed scheme of the cantos is appended below).

Third Canto

I. Introduction . . . 1—16

Byron introduces himself as starting up from dream on board a ship on the voyage from England to the continent; and after speaking of his personal grief introduces Harold to us again.

II. The Field of Waterloo . . 17—45

A general review of the conflict; praise of Major Howard, the poet's cousin; a tribute to Napoleon.

III. The Rhine . . . 46—62

A vivid sketch of the bounding river; a reference to Harold and his love. Coblentz with its memories of the French General, Marceau; and the castle of Ehrenbretstein.

IV. Switzerland . . . 63—100

The field of Morat where the Swiss destroyed the forces of the Duke of Burgundy.

V. Byron's farewell, with a parting reference to his daughter, Ada.

FOURTH CANTO

I. VENICE 1—29

Her vanished glories; the songless gondolier, the spouseless Adriatic, the rotting Bucentaur: the glory of Lepanto and the tyranny of Austria.

II. ARQUA 30—34

The tomb of Laura's lover—Petrarch.

III. FERRARA 35—39

The antique brood of Este: Torquato's imperial shade.

IV. A DIGRESSION 40—47

Italy and her fatal gift of beauty; once mother of Arms and still the mother of Arts.

V. FLORENCE, THE ETRURIAN ATHENS . 48—60

The birthplace of modern Luxury and Commerce; statues and wonderful works of art—the Venus de Medici; Santa Croce's holy precincts—the ashes of Alfieri, Galileo, Machiavelli, Dante, Petrach, Boccocio.

VI. SCENES OF NATURE WITH THEIR HISTORICAL ASSOCIATIONS . . . 61—77

Lake Thrasimene and the great battle that was fought there; Clitumnus, an affluent of the Tiber; the waterfall of Terni; the woody Appenines; Seracte's height with its memory of the 'lyric Roman,' Horace.

VII. ROME 78—163

The Niobe of nations: how her glories have expired star by star: Time and Ignorance hide her from us. Brutus, Tully, Virgil, Livy, the

dictatorial wreath of Pompey's dread statue. Napoleon, the 'fool of false ambition.' Freedom and Tyranny: the tomb of Caecilia Metella: the nameless column to Phocas: Rienzi. Love; the Frenzy of youth: the dying Gaul; the Coliseum: St. Peter's: Vatican and the statue of Laocoon.

VIII. BYRON'S FAREWELL 164—186

Reflections on death, suggesting the death of Princess Charlotte: Byron beholds the sea from Albano's height: his address to the Ocean.

Childe Harold's Pilgrimage

CANTO THE THIRD.

Is thy face like thy mother's, my fair child !
Ada ! sole daughter of my house and heart ?
When last I saw thy young blue eyes they smiled,
And then we parted,—not as now we part,
But with a hope.—
Awaking with a start,
The waters heave around me ; and on high
The winds lift up their voices : I depart,
Whither I know not ; but the hour's gone by,
When Albion's lessening shores could grieve or glad mine eye.

Once more upon the waters ! yet once more !
And the waves bound beneath me as a steed
That knows his rider. Welcome to their roar !
Swift be their guidance, wheresoe'er it lead !
Though the strain'd mast should quiver as a reed,
And the rent canvas fluttering strew the gale,
Still must I on ; for I am as a weed,
Flung from the rock, on Ocean's foam to sail
Where'er the surge may sweep, the tempest's breath prevail.

In my youth's summer I did sing of One,
The wandering outlaw of his own dark mind ;
Again I seize the theme, then but begun,
And bear it with me, as the rushing wind
Bears the cloud onwards : in that Tale I find
The furrows of long thought, and dried-up tears,
Which, ebbing, leave a sterile track behind,
O'er which all heavily the journeying years
Plod the last sands of life,—where not a flower appears.

Since my young days of passion—joy, or pain,
Perchance my heart and harp have lost a string,
And both may jar : it may be, that in vain
I would essay as I have sung to sing.

Yet, though a dreary strain, to this I cling ;
So that it wean me from the weary dream
Of selfish grief or gladness—so it fling
Forgetfulness around me—it shall seem
To me, though to none else, a not ungrateful theme

5. He, who grown aged in this world of woe,
In deeds, not years, piercing the depths of life,
So that no wonder waits him ; nor below
Can love or sorrow, fame, ambition, strife,
Cut to his heart again with the keen knife
Of silent, sharp endurance : he can tell
Why thought seeks refuge in lone caves, yet rife
With airy images, and shapes which dwell
Still unimpair'd, though old, in the soul's haunted cell.

6. 'Tis to create, and in creating live
A being more intense, that we endow
With form our fancy, gaining as we give
The life we image, even as I do now.
What am I ? Nothing : but not so art thou,
Soul of my thought ! with whom I traverse earth,
Invisible but gazing, as I glow
Mix'd with thy spirit, blended with thy birth,
And feeling still with thee in my crush'd feelings' dearth.

7. Yet must I think less wildly :—I *have* thought
Too long and darkly, till my brain became,
In its own eddy boiling and o'erwrought,
A whirling gulf of phantasy and flame :
And thus, untaught in youth my heart to tame,
My springs of life were poison'd. 'Tis too late !
Yet am I changed ; though still enough the same
In strength to bear what time cannot abate,
And feed on bitter fruits without accusing Fate.

8. Something too much of this :—but now 'tis past,
And the spell closes with its silent seal.
Long absent HAROLD re-appears at last ;
He of the breast which fain no more would feel,
Wrung with the wounds which kill not, but ne'er heal

Yet Time, who changes all, had alter'd him
In soul and aspect as in age : years steal
Fire from the mind as vigour from the limb ;
And life's enchanted cup but sparkles near the brim.

His had been quaff'd too quickly, and he found
The dregs were wormwood ; but he fill'd again,
And from a purer fount, on holier ground,
And deem'd its spring perpetual ; but in vain !
Still round him clung invisibly a chain
Which gall'd for ever, fettering though unseen,
And heavy though it clank'd not ; worn with pain,
Which pined although it spoke not, and grew keen,
Entering with every step he took through many a scene

Secure in guarded coldness, he had mix'd
Again in fancied safety with his kind,
And deem'd his spirit now so firmly fix'd
And sheath'd with an invulnerable mind,
That, if no joy, no sorrow lurk'd behind ;
And he, as one, might 'midst the many stand
Unheeded, searching through the crowd to find
Fit speculation ; such as in strange land
He found in wonder-works of God and Nature's hand.

But who can view the ripen'd rose, nor seek
To wear it ? who can curiously behold
The smoothness and the sheen of Beauty's cheek,
Nor feel the heart can never all grow old ?
Who can contemplate Fame through clouds unfold
The star which rises o'er her steep, nor climb ?
Harold, once more within the vortex, roll'd
On with the giddy circle, chasing Time,
Yet with a nobler aim than in his youth's fond prime.

But soon he knew himself the most unfit
Of men to herd with man ; with whom he held
Little in common ; untaught to submit
His thoughts to others, though his soul was quell'd
In youth by his own thoughts ; still uncompell'd,

He would not yield dominion of his mind
To spirits against whom his own rebell'd ;
Proud though in desolation ; which could find
A life within itself, to breathe without mankind.

13. Where rose the mountains, there to him were friends ;
Where roll'd the ocean, thereon was his home ;
Where a blue sky, and glowing clime, extends,
He had the passion and the power to roam ;
The desert, forest, cavern, breaker's foam,
Were unto him companionship ; they spake
A mutual language, clearer than the tome
Of his land's tongue, which he would oft forsake
For Nature's pages glass'd by sunbeams on the lake.

14. Like the Chaldean, he could watch the stars,
Till he had peopled them with beings bright
As their own beams ; and earth, and earth-born jars,
And human frailties, were forgotten quite :
Could he have kept his spirit to that flight
He had been happy ; but this clay will sink
Its spark immortal, envying it the light
To which it mounts, as if to break the link
That keeps us from you heaven which woos us to its brink

15. But in man's dwellings he became a thing
Restless and worn, and stern and wearisome,
Droop'd as a wild-born falcon with clipt wing,
To whom the boundless air alone were home :
Then came his fit again, which to o'ercome,
As eagerly the barr'd-up bird will beat
His breast and beak against his wiry dome
Till the blood tinge his plumage, so the heat
Of his impeded soul would through his bosom eat.

16. Self-exiled Harold wanders forth again,
With nought of hope left, but with less of gloom ;
The very knowledge that he lived in vain,
That all was over on this side the tomb,
Had made Despair a smilingness assume,

Which, though 'twere wild,—as on the plunder'd wreck
When mariners would madly meet their doom
With draughts intemperate on the sinking deck,—
it yet inspire a cheer, which he forbore to check.

17. Stop !—for thy tread is on an Empire's dust !
An earthquake's spoil is sepulchred below !
Is the spot mark'd with no colossal bust ?
Nor column trophied for triumphal show ?
None ; but the moral's truth tells simpler so,
As the ground was before, thus let it be ;—
How that red rain hath made the harvest grow !
And is this all the world has gain'd by thee,
Thou first and last of fields ! king-making Victory !

18. And Harold stands upon this place of skulls,
The grave of France, the deadly Waterloo !
How in an hour the power which gave annuls
Its gifts, transferring fame as fleeting too !
In 'pride of place' here last the eagle flew,
Then tore with bloody talon the rent plain,
Pierced by the shaft of banded nations through ;
Ambition's life and labours all were vain ;
He wears the shatter'd links of the world's broken chain.

19 Fit retribution ! Gaul may champ the bit
And foam in fetters ;—but is Earth more free ?
Did nations combat to make *One* submit ;
Or league to teach all kings true sovereignty ?
What ! shall reviving Thraldom again be
The patch'd-up idol of enlighten'd days ?
Shall we, who struck the Lion down, shall we
Pay the Wolf homage ? proffering lowly gaze
And servile knees to thrones ? No ; *prove* before ye praise !

20. If not, o'er one fallen despot boast no more !
In vain fair cheeks were furrow'd with hot tears
For Europe's flowers long rooted up before
The trampler of her vineyards ; in vain years
Of death, depopulation, bondage, fears,

Have all been borne, and broken by the accord
Of roused-up millions ; all that most endears
Glory, is when the myrtle wreathes a sword
Such as Harmodius drew on Athens' tyrant lord.

21. There was a sound of revelry by night,
And Belgium's capital had gather'd then
Her Beauty and her Chivalry, and bright
The lamps shone o'er fair women and brave men ,
A thousand hearts beat happily ; and when
Music arose with its voluptuous swell,
Soft eyes look'd love to eyes which spake again,
And all went merry as a marriage bell ;
But hush ! hark ! a deep sound strikes like a rising knell !

22 Did ye not hear it ?—No ; 'twas but the wind
Or the car rattling o'er the stony street ;
On with the dance ! let joy be unconfined ;
No sleep till morn, when Youth and Pleasure meet
To chase the glowing Hours with flying feet—
But hark !—that heavy sound breaks in once more,
As if the clouds its echo would repeat ;
And nearer, clearer, deadlier than before !
Arm ! Arm ! it is—it is—the cannon's opening roar !

23. Within a window'd niche of that high hall
Sate Brunswick's fated chieftain ; he did hear
That sound the first amidst the festival,
And caught its tone with Death's prophetic ear ;
And when they smiled because he deem'd it near,
His heart more truly knew that peal too well
Which stretch'd his father on a bloody bier,
And roused the vengeance blood alone could quell ;
He rush'd into the field, and, foremast fighting, fell.

24. Ah ! then and there was hurrying to and fro,
And gathering tears, and tremblings of distress,
And cheeks all pale, which but an hour ago
Blushed at the praise of their own loveliness ;
And there were sudden partings, such as press

The life from out young hearts, and chocking sighs
Which ne'er might be repeated ; who could guess
If ever more should meet those mutual eyes,
Since upon night so sweet such awful morn could rise !

5. And there was mounting in hot haste : the steed,
The mustering squadron, and the clattering car,
Went pouring forward with impetuous speed,
And swiftly forming in the ranks of war ;
And the deep thunder peal on peal afar ;
And near, the beat of the alarming drum
Roused up the soldier ere the morning star ;
While throng'd the citizens with terror dumb,
Or whispering, with white lips—'The foe ! They come ! they come !"

6 And wild and high the 'Cameron's gathering' rose !
The war-note of Lochiel, which Albyn's hills
Have heard, and heard, too have her Saxon foes :
How in the noon of night that pibroch thrils,
Savage and shrill ! But with the breath which fills
Their mountain-pipe, so fill the mountaineers
With the fierce native daring which instils
The stirring memory of a thousand years,
And Evan's, Donald's fame rings in each clansman's ears !

7 And Ardennes waves above them her green leaves,
Dewy with nature's tear drops as they pass,
Grieving, if aught inanimate e'er grieves,
Over the unreturning brave,—alas !
Ere evening to be trodden like the grass
Which now beneath them, but above shall grow
In its next verdure, when this fiery mass
Of living valour ; rolling on the foe
And burning with high hope, shall moulder cold and low.

8 Last noon beheld them full of lusty life,
Last eve in Beauty's circle proudly gay,
The midnight brought the signal-sound of strife,
The morn the marshalling in arms,—the day
Battle's magnificently-stern array !

The thunder-clouds close o'er it, which when rent
The earth is cover'd thick with other clay,
Which her own clay shall cover, heap'd and pent,
Rider and horse,—friend, foe,—in one red burial blent!

29. Their praise is hymn'd by loftier harps than mine:
Yet one I would select from that proud throng,
Partly because they blend me with his line,
And partly that I did his sire some wrong,
And partly that bright names will hallow song;
And his was of the bravest, and when shower'd
The death-bolts deadliest the thinn'd files along,
Even where the thickest of war's tempest lower'd,
They reach'd no nobler breast than thine, young gallant Howard

30. There have been tears and breaking hearts for thee,
And mine were nothing had I such to give;
But when I stood beneath the fresh green tree,
Which living waves where thou didst cease to live
And saw around me the wide field revive
With fruits and fertile promise, and the Spring
Came forth her work of gladness to contrive,
With all her reckless birds upon the wing,
I turn'd from all she brought to those she could not bring

31. I turn'd to thee, to thousands, of whom each
And one as all a ghastly gap did make
In his own kind and kindred, whom to teach
Forgetfulness were mercy for their sake;
The Archangel's trump, not Glory's must awake
Those whom they thirst for; though the sound of Fame
May for a moment soothe, it cannot slake
The fever of vain longing, and the name
So honour'd but assumes a stronger, bitterer claim.

32. They mourn, but smile at length; and, smiling, mourn
The tree will wither long before it fall;
The hull drives on, though mast and sail be torn;
The roof-tree sinks, but moulders on the hall
In massy hoariness; the ruin'd wall

Stands when its wind-worn battlements are gone ;
The bars survive the captive they enthral :
The day drags through, though storms keep out the sun
And thus the heart will break, yet brokenly live on :

33. Even as a broken mirror, which the glass
In every fragment multiplies ; and makes
A thousand images of one that was,
The same, and still the more, the more it breaks ;
And thus the heart will do which not forsakes,
Living in shatter'd guise ; and still, and cold,
And bloodless, with its sleepless sorrow aches,
Yet withers on till all without is old,
Showing no visible sign, for such things are untold.

34. There is a very life in our despair,
Vitality of poison,—a quick root
Which feeds these deadly branches ; for it were
As nothing did we die ; but Life will suit
Itself to Sorrow's most detested fruit,
Like to the apples on the Dead Sea's shore,
All ashes to the taste : Did man compute
Existence by enjoyment, and count o'er
Such hours 'gainst years of life, say, would he name three-score

35. The Psalmist number'd out the years of man :
They are enough ; and if thy tale be *true*,
Thou, who didst grudge him even that fleeting span,
More than enough, thou fatal Waterloo !
Millions of tongues record thee, and anew
Their children's lips shall echo them, and say—
'Here, where the sword united nations drew,
Our countrymen were warring on that day !'
And this is much, and all which will not pass away.

36. There sunk the greatest, nor the worst of men,
Whose spirit, antithetically mixt,
One moment of the mightiest, and again
On little objects with like firmness fixt ;
Extreme in all things ! hadst thou been betwixt,

Thy throne had still been thine, or never been ;
For daring made thy rise as fall : thou seek'st
Even now to re-assume the imperial mien,
And shake again the world, the Thunderer of the scene!

37 Conqueror and captive of the earth art thou !
She trembles at thee still, and thy wild name
Was ne'er more bruited in men's minds than now
That thou art nothing, save the jest of Fame,
Who woo'd thee once, thy vassal, and became
The flatterer of thy fierceness, till thou wert
A god unto thyself ; nor less the same
To the astounded kingdoms all inert,
Who deem'd thee for a time whate'er thou didst assert

38 Oh, more or less than man—in high or low,
Battling with nations, flying from the field ;
Now making monarchs' necks thy footstool, now
More than thy meanest soldier taught to yield ;
An empire thou couldst crush, command, rebuild,
But govern not thy pettiest passion, nor,
However deeply in men's spirits skill'd,
Look through thine own, nor curb the lust of war,
Nor learn that tempted Fate will leave the loftiest star.

39 Yet well thy soul hath brook'd the turning tide
With that untaught innate philosophy,
Which, be it wisdom, coldness, or deep pride,
Is gall and wormwood to an enemy.
When the whole host of hatred stood hard by,
To watch and mock thee shrinking, thou hast smiled
With a sedate and all-enduring eye,—
When Fortune fled her spoil'd and favourite child,
He stood unbow'd beneath the ills upon him piled.

40 Sager than in thy fortunes ; for in them
Ambition steel'd thee on too far to show
That just habitual scorn, which could contemn
Men and their thoughts ; 'twas wise to feel, not so
To wear it ever on thy lip and brow,

And spurn the iustruments thou wert to use
Till they were turn'd unto thine overthrow :
'Tis but a worthless world to win or lose ;
So hath it proved to thee, and all such lot who choose.

If, like a tower upon a headland rock,
Thou hast been made to stand or fall alone,
Such scorn of man had help'd to brave the shock ;
But men's thoughts were the steps which paved thy throne,
Their admiration thy best weapon shone ;
The part of Philip's son was thine, not then
(Unless aside thy purple had been thrown)
Like stern Diogenes to mock at men ;
For sceptred cynics earth were far too wide a den.

But quiet to quick bosoms is a hell,
And *there* hath been thy bane ; there is a fire
And motion of the soul which will not dwell
In its own narrow being, but aspire
Beyond the fitting medium of desire ;
And, but once kindled, quenchless evermore,
Preys upon high adventure, nor can tire
Of aught but rest ; a fever at the core,
Fatal to him who bears, to all who ever bore.

This makes the mad men who have made men mad
By their contagion ; conquerors and kings,
Founders of sects and systems, to whom add
Sophists, Bards, Statesmen, all unquiet things
Which stir too strongly the soul's secret springs,
And are themselves the fools to those they fool ;
Envied, yet how unenviable ! what stings
Are theirs ! One breast laid open were a school
Which would unteach mankind the lust to shine or rule

Their breath is agitation, and their life
A storm whereon they ride, to sink at last,
And yet so nursed and bigoted to strife,
That should their days, surviving perils past,
Melt to calm twilight, they feel overcast

With sorrow and supineness, and so die ;
Even as a flame unfed, which runs to waste
With its own flickering, or a sword laid by,
Which eats into itself, and rusts ingloriously.

45. He who ascends to mountain-tops, shall find
The loftiest peaks most wrapt in clouds and snow ;
He who surpasses or subdues mankind,
Must look down on the hate of those below.
Though high *above* the sun of glory glow,
And far *beneath* the earth and ocean spread,
Round him are icy rocks, and loudly blow
Contending tempests on his naked head,
And thus reward the toils which to those summits led

46. Away with these ! true Wisdom's world will be
Within its own creation, or in thine,
Maternal Nature ! for who teems like thee,
Thus on the banks of thy majestic Rhine ?
There Harold gazes on a work divine,
A blending of all beauties ; streams and dells,
Fruit, foliage, crag, wood, cornfield, mountain, vine,
And chiefless castles breathing stern farewells
From gray but leafy walls, where Ruin greenly dwells

47 And there they stand, as stands a lofty mind,
Worn, but unstooping to the baser crowd,
All tenantless, save to the crannying wind,
Or holding dark communion with the cloud.
There was a day when they were young and proud ,
Banners on high, and battles pass'd below ;
But they who fought are in a bloody shroud,
And those which waved are shredless dust ere now,
And the bleak battlements shall bear no future blow

48. Beneath those battlements, within those walls,
Power dwelt amidst her passions ; in proud state
Each robber chief upheld his armed halls,
Doing his evil will, nor less elate
Than mightier heroes of a longer date.

What want these outlaws conquerors should have
But history's purchased page to call them great?
A wider space, an ornamented grave?
Their hopes were not less warm, their souls were full as brave.

In their baronial feuds and single fields,
What deeds of prowess unrecorded died!
And Love, which lent a blazon to their shields,
With emblems well devised by amorous pride,
Through all the mail of iron hearts would glide;
But still their flame was fierceness, and drew on
Keen contest and destruction near allied,
And many a tower for some fair mischief won,
Saw the discolour'd Rhine beneath its ruin run.

But thou, exulting and abounding river!
Making thy waves a blessing as they flow
Through banks whose beauty would endure for ever
Could man but leave thy bright creation so,
Nor its fair promise from the surface mow
With the sharp scythe of conflict,—then to see
Thy valley of sweet waters, were to know
Earth paved like heaven; and to seem such to me,
Even now what wants thy stream?—that it should Lethe be.

A thousand battles have assail'd thy banks,
But these and half their fame have pass'd away,
And Slaughter heap'd on high his weltering ranks;
Their very graves are gone, and what are they?
Thy tide wash'd down the blood of yesterday,
And all was stainless, and on thy clear stream
Glass'd, with its dancing light, the sunny ray;
But o'er the blacken'd memory's blighting dream
Thy waves would vainly roll, all sweeping as they seem.

Thus Harold inly said, and pass'd along,
Yet not insensible to all which here
Awoke the jocund birds to early song
In glens which might have made even exile dear:
Though on his brow were graven lines austere,

And tranquil sternness, which had ta'en the place
Of feelings fierier far but less severe,
Joy was not always absent from his face,
But o'ver it in such scenes would steal with transient trace

53. Nor was all love shut from him, though his days
Of passion had consumed themselves to dust.
It is in vain that we would coldly gaze
On such as smile upon us ; the heart must
Leap kindly back to kindness, though disgust
Hath ween'd it from all worldlings : thus he felt,
For there was soft remembrance, and sweet trust
In one fond breast, to which his own would melt,
And in its tenderer hour on that his bosom dwelt.

54. And he had learn'd to love,—I know not why,
For this in such as him seems strange of mood,—
The helpless looks of blooming infancy,
Even in its earliest nurture ; what subdued,
To change like this, a mind so far imbued
With scorn of man, it little boots to know ;
But thus it was ; and though in solitude
Small power the nipp'd affections have to grow,
In him this glow'd when all beside had ceased to glow.

55. And there was one soft breast, as hath been said,
Which unto his was bound by stronger ties
Than the church links withal ; and, though unwed,
That love was pure, and, far above disguise,
Had stood the test of mortal enmities
Still undivided, and cemented more
By peril, dreaded most in female eyes ;
But this was firm, and from a foreign shore
Well to that heart might his these absent greetings pour !

1. The castled crag of Drachenfels
Frowns o'er the wide and winding Rhine,
Whose breast of waters broadly swells
Between the banks which bear the vine,
And hills all rich with blossom'd trees,
And fields which promise corn and wine,

And scatter'd cities crowning these,
Whose far white walls along them shine,
Have strew'd a scene, which I should see
With double joy wert *thou* with me.

2. And peasant girls, with dark blue eyes,
And hands which offer early flowers,
Walk smiling o'er this paradise;
Above, the frequent feudal towers
Through green leaves lift their walls of gray;
And many a rock which steeply lowers,
And noble arch in proud decay,
Look o'er this vale of vintage-bowers;
But one thing want these banks of Rhine,—
Thy gentle hand to clasp in mine!

3. I send the lilies given to me;
Though long before thy hand they touch,
I know that they must wither'd be,
But yet reject them not as such;
For I have cherish'd them as dear,
Because they yet may meet thine eye,
And guide thy soul to mine even here,
When thou behold'st them drooping nigh,
And know'st them gather'd by the Rhine,
And offer'd from my heart to thine!

4. The river nobly foams and flows,
The charm of this enchanted ground,
And all its thousand turns disclose
Some fresher beauty varying round:
The haughtiest breast its wish might bound
Through life to dwell delighted here;
Nor could on earth a spot be found
To nature and to me so dear,
Could thy dear eyes in following mine
Still sweeten more these banks of Rhine!

By Coblentz, on a rise of gentle ground,
There is a small and simple pyramid,
Crowning the summit of the verdant mound;
Beneath its base are heroes' ashes hid,

Our enemy's—but let not that forbid
Honour to Marceau! o'er whose early tomb
Tears, big tears, gush'd from the rough soldier's lid,
Lamenting and yet envying such a doom,
Falling for France, whose rights he battled to resume.

57. Brief, brave, and glorious was his young career,—
His mourners were two hosts, his friends and foes;
And fitly may the stranger lingering here
Pray for his gallant spirit's bright repose;
For he was Freedom's champion, one of those,
The few in number, who had not o'erstept
The charter to chastise which she bestows
On such as wield her weapons; he had kept
The whiteness of his soul, and thus men o'er him wept.

58. Here Ehrenbreitstein, with her shatter'd wall
Black with the miner's blast, upon her height
Yet shows of what she was, when shell and ball
Rebounding idly on her strength did light:
A tower of victory! from whence the flight
Of baffled foes was watch'd along the plain:
But Peace destroy'd what War could never blight,
And laid those proud roofs bare to Summer's rain—
On which the iron shower for years had pour'd in vain.

59. Adieu to thee, fair Rhine! How long delighted
The stranger fain would linger on his way!
Thine is a scene alike where souls united
Or lonely Contemplation thus might stray;
And could the ceaseless vultures cease to prey
On self-condemning bosoms, it were here,
Where Nature, nor too sombre nor too gay,
Wild but not rude, awful yet not austere,
Is to the mellow Earth as Autumn to the year.

60. Adieu to thee, again! a vain adieu!
There can be no farewell to scene like thine;
The mind is colour'd by thy every hue;
And if reluctantly the eyes resign
Their cherish'd gaze upon thee, lovely Rhine!

'Tis with the thankful heart of parting praise ;
More mighty spots may rise, more glaring shine,
But none unite in one attaching maze
The brilliant, fair, and soft,—the glories of old days,

The negligently grand, the fruitful bloom
Of coming ripeness, the white city's sheen,
The rolling stream, the precipice's gloom,
The forest's growth, and Gothic walls between,
The wild rocks shaped as they had turrets been,
In mockery of man's art ; and these withal
A race of faces happy as the scene,
Whose fertile bounties here extend to all,
Still springing o'er thy banks, though Empires near them fall.

But these recede. Above me are the Alps,
The palaces of Nature, whose vast walls
Have pinnacled in clouds their snowy scalps,
And throned Eternity in icy halls
Of cold sublimity, where forms and falls
The avalanche—the thunderbolt of snow !
All that expands the spirit, yet appals,
Gather around these summits, as to show
How Earth may pierce to Heaven, yet leave vain man below.

But ere these matchless heights I dare to scan,
There is a spot should not be pass'd in vain,—
Morat ! the proud, the patriot field ! where man
May gaze on ghastly trophies of the slain,
Nor blush for those who conquer'd on that plain ;
Here Burgundy bequeath'd his tombless host,
A bony heap, through ages to remain,
Themselves their monument ;—the Stygian coast
Unsepulchred they roam'd, and shriek'd each wandering ghost.

While Waterloo with Cannæ's carnage vies,
Morat and Marathon twin names shall stand ;
They were true Glory's stainless victories,
Won by the unambitious heart and hand
Of a proud, brotherly, and civic band,

All unbought champions in no princely cause
Of vice-entail'd Corruption ; they no land
Doom'd to bewail the blasphemy of laws
Making kings' rights divine, by some Draconic clause.

65. By a lone wall a lonelier column rears
A gray and grief-worn aspect of old days ;
'Tis the last remnant of the wreck of years,
And looks as with the wild-bewilder'd gaze
Of one to stone converted by amaze,
Yet still with consciousness ; and there it stands
Making a marvel that it not decays,
When the coeval pride of human hands,
Levell'd Adventicum, hath strew'd her subject lands.

66. And there—oh ! sweet and sacred be the name !—
Julia—the daughter, the devoted—gave
Her youth to Heaven ; her heart, beneath a claim
Nearest to Heaven's, broke o'er a father's grave.
Justice is sworn 'gainst tears, and hers would crave
The life she lived in ; but the judge was just,
And then she died on him she could not save.
Their tomb was simple, and without a bust,
And held within their urn, one mind, one heart, one dust.

67. But these are deeds which should not pass away,
And names that must not wither, though the earth
Forgets her empires with a just decay,
The enslavers and the enslaved, their death and birth
The high, the mountain-majesty of worth
Should be, and shall, survivor of its woe,
And from its immortality look forth
In the sun's face, like yonder Alpine snow,
Imperishably pure beyond all things below.

68. Lake Leman woos me with its crystal face,
The mirror where the stars and mountains view
The stillness of their aspect in each trace
Its clear depth yields of their far height and hue :
There is too much of man here, to look through

With a fit mind the might which I behold ;
But soon in me shall Loneliness renew
Thoughts hid, but not less cherish'd than of old,
Ere mingling with the herd had penn'd me in their fold.

69. To fly from, need not be to hate, mankind :
All are not fit with them to stir and toil,
Nor is it discontent to keep the mind
Deep in its fountain, lest it overboil
In the hot throng, where we become the spoil
Of our infection, till too late and long
We may deplore and struggle with the coil,
In wretched interchange of wrong for wrong
Midst a contentious world, striving where none are strong.

70. There, in a moment, we may plunge our years
In fatal penitence, and in the blight
Of our own soul turn all our blood to tears,
And colour things to come with hues of Night ;
The race of life becomes a hopeless flight
To those that walk in darkness : on the sea
The boldest steer but where their ports invite ;
But there are wanderers o'er Eternity
Whose bark drives on and on, and anchor'd ne'er shall be.

71. Is it not better, then, to be alone,
And love Earth only for its earthly sake ?
By the blue rushing of the arrowy Rhone,
Or the pure bosom of its nursing lake,
Which feeds it as a mother who doth make
A fair but froward infant her own care,
Kissing its cries away as these awake ;—
Is it not better thus our lives to wear,
Than join the crushing crowd, doom'd to inflict or bear ?

72. I live not in myself, but I become
Portion of that around me ; and to me
High mountains are a feeling, but the hum
Of human cities torture : I can see
Nothing to loathe in nature, save to be

A link reluctant in a fleshly chain,
Class'd among creatures, when the soul can flee,
And with the sky, the peak, the heaving plain
Of ocean, or the stars, mingle, and not in vain.

73. And thus I am absorb'd, and this is life:
I look upon the peopled desert past,
As on a place of agony and strife,
Where, for some sin, to sorrow I was cast,
To act and suffer, but remount at last
With a fresh pinion; which I feel to spring,
Though young, yet waxing vigorous as the blast
Which it would cope with, on delighted wing,
Spurning the clay-cold bonds which round our being cling.

74. And when, at length, the mind shall be all free
From what it hates in this degraded form,
Reft of its carnal life, save what shall be
Existent happier in the fly and worm,—
When elements to elements conform,
And dust is as it should be, shall I not
Feel all I see, less dazzling, but more warm?
The bodiless thought? the Spirit of each spot?
Of which, even now, I share at times the immortal lot?

75. Are not the mountains, waves, and skies, a part
Of me and of my soul, as I of them?
Is not the love of these deep in my heart
With a pure passion? should I not contemn
All objects, if compared with these? and stem
A tide of suffering, rather than forego
Such feelings for the hard and worldly phlegm
Of those whose eyes are only turn'd below,
Gazing upon the ground, with thoughts which dare not glow?

76. But this is not my theme; and I return
To that which is immediate, and require
Those who find contemplation in the urn,
To look on One, whose dust was once all fire,
A native of the land where I respire

The clear air for a while—a passing guest,
Where he became a being,—whose desire
Was to be glorious ; 'twas a foolish quest,
The which to gain and keep, he sacrificed all rest.

77. Here the self-torturing sophist, wild Rousseau,
The apostle of affliction, he who threw
Enchantment over passion, and from woe
Wrung overwhelming eloquence, first drew
The breath which made him wretched ; yet he knew
How to make madness beautiful, and cast
O'er erring deeds and thoughts a heavenly hue
Of words, like sunbeams, dazzling as they past
The eyes, which o'er them shed tears feelingly and fast.

78. His love was passion's essence :—as a tree
On fire by lightning, with ethereal flame
Kindled he was, and blasted ; for to be
Thus, and enamour'd, were in him the same.
But his was not the love of living dame,
Nor of the dead who rise upon our dreams,
But of ideal beauty, which became
In him existence, and o'erflowing teems
Along his burning page, distemper'd though it seems.

79. *This* breathed itself to life in Julie, *this*
Invested her with all that's wild and sweet ;
This hallow'd, too, the memorable kiss
Which every morn his fever'd lip would greet,
From hers, who but with friendship his would meet ;
But to that gentle touch through brain and breast
Flash'd the thrill'd spirit's love-devouring heat ;
In that absorbing sigh perchance more blest
Than vulgar minds may be with all they seek possest.

80. His life was one long war with self-sought foes,
Or friends by him self-banish'd ; for his mind
Had grown Suspicion's sanctuary, and chose,
For its own cruel sacrifice, the kind,
'Gainst whom he raged with fury strange and blind.

But he was phrensied,—wherefore, who may know ?
Since cause might be which skill could never find ;
But he was phrensied by disease or woe,
To that worst pitch of all, which wears a reasoning show.

81. For then he was inspired, and from him came,
As from the Pythian's mystic cave of yore,
Those oracles which set the world in flame,
Nor ceased to burn till kingdoms were no more :
Did he not this for France ? which lay before
Bow'd to the inborn tyranny of years ?
Broken and trembling to the yoke she bore,
Till by the voice of him and his compeers
Roused up to too much wrath, which follows o'ergrown fears ?

82. They made themselves a fearful monument !
The wreck of old opinions—things which grew,
Breathed from the birth of time : the veil they rent,
And what behind it lay, all earth shall view.
But good with ill they also overthrew,
Leaving but ruins, wherewith to rebuild
Upon the same foundation, and renew
Dungeons and thrones, which the same hour refill'd,
As heretofore, because ambition was self-will'd.

83. But this will not endure, nor be endured !
Mankind have felt their strength, and made it felt.
They might have used it better, but allured
By their new vigour, sternly have they dealt
On one another ; Pity ceased to melt
With her once natural charities. But they,
Who in oppression's darkness caved had dwelt,
They were not eagles, nourish'd with the day ;
What marvel then, at times, if they mistook their prey ?

84 What deep wounds ever closed without a scar ?
The hearts bleed longest, and but heal to wear
That which disfigures it ; and they who war
With their own hopes and have been vanquish'd, bear
Silence, but not submission : in his lair

Fix'd Passion holds his breath, until the hour
Which shall atone for years ; none need despair :
It came, it cometh, and will come,—the power
To punish or forgive—in *one* we shall be slower.

Clear, placid Leman ! thy contrasted lake,
With the wild world I dwelt in, is a thing
Which warns me, with its stillness, to forsake
Earth's troubled waters for a purer spring.
This quiet sail is as a noiseless wing
To waft me from distraction ; once I loved
Torn oceans roar, but thy soft murmuring
Sounds sweet as if a sister's voice reproved,
That I with stern delights should e'er have been so moved.

It is the hush of night, and all between
Thy margin and the mountains, dusk, yet clear,
Mellow'd and mingling, yet distinctly seen,
Save darken'd Jura, whose capt heights appear
Precipitously steep ; and drawing near,
There breathes a living fragrance from the shore,
Of flowers yet fresh with childhood ; on the ear
Drops the light drip of the suspended oar,
Or chirps the grasshopper one good-night carol more ;

He is an evening reveller, who makes
His life an infancy, and sings his fill ;
At intervals, some bird from out the brakes
Starts into voice a moment, then is still.
There seems a floating whisper on the hill,
But that is fancy, for the starlight dews
All silently their tears of love instil,
Weeping themselves away, till they infuse
Deep into Natur ' breast the spirit of her hues.

Ye stars ! which are the poetry of heaven !
If in your bright leaves we would read the fate
Of men and empires,—'tis to be forgiven,
That in our aspirations to be great,
Our destinies o'erleap their mortal state,

And claim a kindred with you ; for ye are
A beauty and a mystery, and create
In us such love and reverence from afar,
That fortune, fame, power, life have named themselves a star.

89. All heaven and earth are still—though not in sleep,
But breathless, as we grow when feeling most ;
And silent, as we stand in thoughts too deep :—
All heaven and earth are still : From the high host
Of stars, to the lull'd lake and mountain-coast,
All is concenter'd in a life intense,
Where not a beam, nor air, nor leaf is lost,
But hath a part of being, and a sense
Of that which is of all Creator and defence.

90. Then stirs the feeling infinite, so felt
In solitude, where we are *least* alone ;
A truth, which through our being then doth melt,
And purifies from self : it is a tone,
The soul and source of music, which makes known
Eternal harmony, and sheds a charm
Like to the fabled Cytherea's zone,
Binding all things with beauty ;—'twould disarm
The spectre Death, had he substantial power to harm.

91. Not vainly did the early Persian make
His altar the high places, and the peak
Of earth-o'ergazing mountains, and thus take
A fit and unwall'd temple, there to seek
The Spirit, in whose honour shrines are weak,
Uprear'd of human hands. Come, and compare
Columns and idol-dwellings, Goth or Greek,
With Nature's realms of worship, earth and air,
Nor fix on fond abodes to circumscribe thy pray'r !

92. The sky is changed !—and such a change ! Oh night,
And storm, and darkness, ye are wondrous strong,
Yet lovely in your strength, as is the light
Of a dark eye in woman ! Far along,
From peak to peak, the rattling crags among

Leaps the live thunder! Not from one lone cloud,
But every mountain now hath found a tongue,
And Jura answers, through her misty shroud,
Back to the joyous Alps, who call to her aloud!

93. And this is in the night:—Most glorious night!
Thou wert not sent for slumber! let me be
A sharer in thy fierce and far delight,—
A portion of the tempest and of thee!
How the lit lake shines, a phosphoric sea,
And the big rain comes dancing to the earth!
And now again 'tis black,—and now, the glee
Of the loud hills shakes with its mountain-mirth,
As if they did rejoice o'er a young earthquake's birth.

94. Now, where the swift Rhone cleaves his way between
Heights which appear as lovers who have parted
In hate, whose mining depths so intervene,
That they can meet no more, though broken-hearted;
Though in their souls, which thus each other thwarted,
Love was the very root of the fond rage
Which blighted their life's bloom, and then departed:
Itself expired, but leaving them an age
Of years all winters,—war within themselves to wage.

95. Now, where the quick Rhone thus hath cleft his way,
The mightiest of the storms hath ta'en his stand:
For here, not one, but many, make their play,
And fling their thunder-bolts from hand to hand,
Flashing and cast around; of all the band,
The brightest through these parted hills hath fork'd
His lightnings,—as if he did understand,
That in such gaps as desolation work'd,
There the hot shaft should blast whatever therein lurk'd.

Sky, mountains, river, winds, lake, lightnings! ye!
With night, and clouds, and thunder, and a soul
To make these felt and feeling, well may be
Things that have made me watchful; the far roll
Of your departing voices, is the knoll

Of what in me is sleepless,—if I rest.
But where of ye, O tempests! is the goal?
Are ye like those within the human breast?
Or do ye find, at length, like eagles, some high nest?

97. Could I embody and unbosom now
That which is most within me,—could I wreak
My thoughts upon expression, and thus throw
Soul, heart, mind, passions, feelings, strong or weak,
All that I would have sought, and all I seek,
Bear, know, feel, and yet breathe—into *one* word,
And that one word were Lightning, I would speak;
But as it is, I live and die unheard,
With a most voiceless thought, sheathing it as a sword.

98. The morn is up again, the dewy morn,
With breath all incense, and with cheek all bloom,
Laughing the clouds away with playful scorn,
And living as if earth contain'd no tomb,—
And glowing into day: we may resume
The march of our existence: and thus I,
Still on thy shores, fair Leman, may find room
And food for meditation, nor pass by
Much, that may give us pause, if ponder'd fittingly.

99. Clarens! sweet Clarens, birthplace of deep Love!
Thine air is the young breath of passionate thought;
Thy trees take root in Love; the snows above
The very Glaciers have his colours caught,
And sun-set into rose-hues sees them wrought
By rays which sleep there lovingly: the rocks,
The permanent crags, tell here of Love, who sought
In them a refuge from the worldly shocks,
Which stir and sting the soul with hope that woos, then mocks.

100. Clarens! by heavenly feet thy paths are trod,—
Undying Love's, who here ascends a throne
To which the steps are mountains; where the god
Is a pervading life and light,—so shown
Not on those summits solely, nor alone

In the still cave and forest ; o'er the flower
His eye is sparkling, and his breath hath blown,
His soft and summer breath, whose tender power
Passes the strength of storms in their most desolate hour.

All things are here of *him* ; from the black pines,
Which are his shade on high, and the loud roar
Of torrents, where he listeneth, to the vines
Which slope his green path downward to the shore,
Where the bow'd waters meet him, and adore,
Kissing his feet with murmurs ; and the wood,
The covert of old trees, with trunks all hoar,
But light leaves, young as joy, stands where it stood,
Offering to him, and his, a populous solitude.

A populous solitude of bees and birds,
A fairy-form'd and many-colour'd things,
Who worship him with notes more sweet than words,
And innocently open their glad wings,
Fearless and full of life : the gush of springs,
And fall of lofty fountains, and the bend
Of stirring branches, and the bud which brings
The swiftest thought of beauty, here extend,
Mingling, and made by Love, unto one mighty end.

He who hath loved not, here would learn that lore,
And make his heart a spirit ; he who knows
That tender mystery, will love the more ;
For this is Love's recess, where vain men's woes,
And the world's waste, have driven him far from those,
For 'tis his nature to advance or die ;
He stands not still, but or decays, or grows
Into a boundless blessing, which may vie
With the immortal lights, in its eternity !

'Twas not for fiction chose Rousseau this spot,
Peopling it with affections ; but he found
It was the scene which Passion must allot
To the mind's purified beings ; 'twas the ground
Where early Love his Psyche's zone unbound

And hallow'd it with loveliness : 'tis lone,
And wonderful, and deep, and hath a sound,
And sense, and sight of sweetness ; Here the Rhone
Hath spread himself a couch, the Alps have rear'd a throne.

105 Lausanne ! and Ferney ! ye have been the abodes
Of names which unto you bequeath'd a name ;
Mortals, who sought and found, by dangerous roads,
A path to perpetuity of fame :
They were gigantic minds, and their steep aim
Was, Titan-like, on daring doubts to pile
Thoughts which should call down thunder, and the flame
Of Heaven again assail'd, if Heaven the while
On man and man's research could deign do more than smile.

106 The one was fire and fickleness, a child
Most mutable in wishes, but in mind
A wit as various,—gay, grave, sage, or wild,—
Historian, bard, philosopher, combined ;
He multiplied himself among mankind,
The Proteus of their talents : But his own
Breathed most in ridicule,—which, as the wind,
Blew where it listed, laying all things prone,—
Now to o'erthrow a fool, and now to shake a throne.

107 The other, deep and slow, exhausting thought,
And hiving wisdom with each studious year,
In meditation dwelt, with learning wrought,
And shaped his weapon with an edge severe,
Sapping a solemn creed with solemn sneer ;
The lord of irony,—that master-spell,
Which stung his foes to wrath, which grew from fear,
And doom'd him to the zealot's ready Hell,
Which answers to all doubts so eloquently well.

108 Yet, peace be with their ashes,—for by them,
If merited, the penalty is paid ;
It is not ours to judge,—far less condemn ;
The hour must come when such things shall be made
Known unto all, or hope and dread allay'd

By slumber, on one pillow, in the dust,
Which, thus much we are sure, must lie decay'd ;
And when it shall revive, as is our trust,
'Twill be to be forgiven, or suffer what is just.

But let me quit man's works, again to read
His Maker's, spread around me, and suspend
This page, which from my reveries I feed,
Until it seems prolonging without end.
The clouds above me to the white Alps tend,
And I must pierce them, and survey whate'er
May be permitted, as my steps I bend
To their most great and growing region, where
The earth to her embrace compels the powers of air.

Italia ! too, Italia ! looking on thee,
Full flashes on the soul the light of ages,
Since the fierce Carthaginian almost won thee,
To the last halo of the chiefs and sages
Who glorify thy consecrated pages ;
Thou wert the throne and grave of empires ; still,
The fount at which the panting mind assuages
Her thirst, of knowledge, quaffing there her fill,
Flows from the eternal source of Rome's imperial hill.

Thus far have I proceeded in a theme
Renew'd with no kind auspices :—to feel
We are not what we have been, and to deem
We are not what we should be, and to steel
The heart against itself ; and to conceal,
With a proud caution, love, or hate, or aught,—
Passion or feeling, purpose, grief or zeal,—
Which is the tyrant spirit of our thought,
Is a stern task of soul :—No matter,—it is taught.

And for these words, thus woven into song,
It may be that they are a harmless wile,—
The colouring of the scenes which fleet along,
Which I would seize, in passing, to beguile
My breast, or that of others, for a while.

Fame is the thirst of youth, but I am not
So young as to regard men's frown or smile,
As loss or guerdon of a glorious lot ;
I stood and stand alone,—remember'd or forgot.

113. I have not loved the world, nor the world me ;
I have not flatter'd its rank breath, nor bow'd
To its idolatries a patient knee,
Nor coin'd my cheek to smiles, nor cried aloud
In worship of an echo ; in the crowd
They could not deem me one of such ; I stood
Among them, but not of them ; in a shroud
Of thoughts which were not their thoughts, and still could,
Had I not filed my mind, which thus itself subdued.

114. I have not loved the world, nor the world me,—
But let us part fair foes ; I do believe,
Though I have found them not, that there may be
Words which are things, hopes which will not deceive,
And virtues which are merciful, nor weave
Snares for the failing ; I would also deem
O'er others' griefs that some sincerely grieve ;
That two, or one, are almost what they seem,
That goodness is no name, and happiness no dream.

115. My daughter ! with thy name this song begun ;
My daughter ! with thy name thus much shall end ;
I see thee not, I hear thee not, but none
Can be so wrapt in thee ; thou art the friend
To whom the shadows of far years extend :
Albeit my brow thou never should'st behold,
My voice shall with thy future visions blend,
And reach into thy heart, when mine is cold,
A token and a tone, even from thy father's mould.

116. To aid thy mind's development, to watch
Thy dawn of little joys, to sit and see
Almost thy very growth, to view thee catch
Knowledge of objects,—wonders yet to thee !
To hold thee lightly on a gentle knee,

And print on thy soft cheek a parent's kiss,—
This, it should seem, was not reserved for me ;
Yet this was in my nature : as it is,
I know not what is there, yet something like to this.

117. Yet, though dull Hate as duty should be taught,
I know that thou wilt love me ; though my name
Should be shut from thee, as a spell still fraught
With desolation, and a broken claim :
Though the grave closed between us,—'twere the same,
I know that thou wilt love me ; though to drain
My blood from out thy being were an aim,
And an attainment,—all would be in vain,—
Still thou wouldst love me, still that more than life retain.

118. The child of love, though born in bitterness,
And nurtured in convulsion. Of thy sire
These were the elements, and thine no less.
As yet such are around thee, but thy fire
Shall be more temper'd, and thy hope far higher.
Sweet be thy cradled slumbers ! O'er the sea
And from the mountains where I now respire,
Fain would I waft such blessing upon thee,
As, with a sigh, I deem thou might'st have been to me !

CANTO IV.

'*Visto ho Toscana, Lombardia, Romagna,*
Quel Monte che divide, e quel che serra
Italia, e un mare e l'altro, che la bagna.'

Ariosto, *Satira iii.*

TO

JOHN HOBHOUSE, Esq., A.M., F.R.S., &c., &c, &c.

VENICE, *January* 2, 1818.

MY DEAR HOBHOUSE.

After an interval of eight years between the composition of the first and last cantos of Childe Harold, the conclusion of the poem is about to be submitted to the public. In parting with so old a friend, it is not extraordinary that I should recur to one still older and better,—to one who has beheld the birth and death of the other, and to whom I am far more indebted for the social advantages, of an enlightened friendship, than—though not ungrateful—I can, or could be, to Childe Harold, for any public favour reflected through the poem on the poet,—to one, whom I have known long and accompanied far, whom I have found wakeful over my sickness and kind in my sorrow, glad in my prosperity and firm in my adversity, true in counsel and trusty in peril,—to a friend often tried and never found wanting; —to yourself.

In so doing, I recur from fiction to truth; and in dedicating to you in its complete, or at least concluded state, a poetical work which is the longest, the most thoughtful and comprehensive of my compositions, I wish to do honour to myself by the record of many years' intimacy with a man of learning, of talent, of steadiness, and of honour. It is not for minds like ours to give or to receive flattery; yet the praises of sincerity have ever been permitted to the voice of friendship; and it is not for you, nor even for others, but to relieve a heart which has not elsewhere, or lately, been so much accustomed to the encounter of good-will as to withstand the shock firmly, that I thus attempt to commemorate your

good qualities, or rather the advantages which I have derived from their exertion. Even the recurrence of the date of this letter, the anniversary of the most unfortunate day of my past existence,[1] but which cannot poison my future while I retain the resource of your friendship, and of my own faculties, will henceforth have a more agreeable recollection for both, inasmuch as it will remind us of this my attempt to thank you for an indefatigable regard, such as few men have experienced, and no one could experience without thinking better of his species and of himself.

It has been our fortune to traverse together, at various periods, the countries of chivalry, history, and fable—Spain, Greece, Asia Minor, and Italy; and what Athens and Constantinople were to us a few years ago, Venice and Rome have been more recently. The poem also, or the pilgrim, or both, have accompanied me from first to last; and perhaps it may be a pardonable vanity which induces me to reflect with complacency on a composition which in some degree connects me with the spot where it was produced, and the objects it would fain describe; and however unworthy it may be deemed of those magical and memorable abodes, however short it may fall of our distant conceptions and immediate impressions, yet as a mark of respect for what is venerable, and of feeling for what is glorious, it has been to me a source of pleasure in the production, I part with it with a kind of regret, which I hardly suspected that events could have left me for imaginary objects.

With regard to the conduct of the last canto, there will be found less of the pilgrim than in any of the preceding, and that little slightly if at all, separated from the author speaking in his own person. The fact is, that I had become weary of drawing a line which every one seemed determined not to perceive: like the Chinese in Goldsmith's 'Citizen of the World,' whom nobody would believe to be a Chinese, it was in vain that I asserted, and imagined that I had drawn, a distinction between the author and the pilgrim; and the very anxiety to preserve this difference, and disappointment at finding it unavailing, so far crushed my efforts in the composition, that I determined to abandon it altogether—and have done so. The opinions which have been, or may be, formed on that subject are *now* a matter of indifference; the work is to depend on itself, and not on the writer; and the author, who has no resources in his own mind beyond the reputation, transient or permanent, which is to arise from his literary efforts, deserves the fate of authors.

In the course of the following canto it was my intention, either in the text or in the notes, to have touched upon the present state of

Italian literature, and perhaps of manners. But the text, within the limits I proposed, I soon found hardly sufficient for the labyrinth of external objects, and the consequent reflections; and for the whole of the notes, excepting a few of the shortest, I am indebted to yourself, and these were necessarily limited to the elucidation of the text.

It is also a delicate, and no very grateful task, to dissert upon the literature and manners of a nation so dissimilar; and requires an attention and impartiality, which would induce us—though perhaps no inattentive observers, nor ignorant of the language or customs of the people amongst whom we have recently abode—to distrust, or at least defer our judgment, and more narrowly examine our information. The state of literary, as well as political party, appears to run, or to *have* run, so high, that for a stranger to steer impartially between them is next to impossible. It may be enough, then, at least for my purpose, to quote from their own beautiful language—'Mi pare che in un paese tutto poetico, che vanta la lingua la piu nobile ed insieme la piu dolce, tutte tutte le vie diverse si possono tentare, e che sinche la patria di Alfieri e di Monti non ha perduto L antico valore, in tutte essa dovrebbe essere la prima.' Italy has great names still—Canova, Monti, Ugo, Foscolo, Pindemonte, Visconti, Morelli, Cicognara, Albrizzi, Mezzophanti, Mai, Mustoxidi, Aglietti, and Vacca, will secure to the present generation an honourable place in most of the departments of Art, Science, and Belles lettres; and in some the very highest—Europe—the World—has but one Canova.

It has been somewhere said by Alfieri, that 'La pianta uomo nasce piu robusta in Italia, che in qualunque altra terra—e che gli stessi atroci delitti che vi si commettono ne sono una prova.' Without subscribing to the latter part of his proposition, a dangerous doctrine, the truth of which may be disputed on better grounds, namely, that the Italians are in no respect more ferocious than their neighbours, that man must be wilfully blind, or ignorantly heedless, who is not struck with the extraordinary capacity of this people, or if such a word be admissible their *capabilities*, the facility of their acquisitions, the rapidity of their conceptions, the fire of their genius, their sense of beauty, and, amidst all the disadvantages of repeated revolutions, the desolation of battles, and the despair of ages, their still unquenched 'longing after immortality,'—the immortality of independence And when we ourselves, in riding round the walls of Rome, heard the simple lament of the labourers' chorus, 'Roma! Roma! Roma! non e piu com era prima', it was difficult not to contrast this melancholy dirge with the bacchanal roar of the songs of exultation still

yelled from the London taverns, over the carnage of Mont St. Jean, and the betrayal of Genoa, of Italy, of France, and of the world, by men whose conduct you yourself have exposed in a work worthy of the better days of our history. For me,—

'Non movero mai corda
Ove la turba di sue ciance assorda.'

What Italy has gained by the late transfer of nations, it were useless for Englishmen to inquire, till it becomes ascertained that England has acquired something more than a permanent army and a suspended Habeas Corpus; it is enough for them to look at home. For what they have done abroad, and especially in the South, 'Verily they *will have* their reward,' and at no very distant period.

Wishing you, my dear Hobhouse, a safe and agreeable return to that country whose real welfare can be dearer to none than to yourself, I dedicate to you this poem in its completed state; and repeat once more how truly I am ever

Your obliged and affectionate friend,

BYRON.

1. I STOOD in Venice, on the Bridge of Sighs ;
A palace and a prison on each hand ;
I saw from out the wave her structures rise
As from the stroke of the enchanter's wand :
A thousand years their cloudy wings expand
Around me, and a dying glory smiles
O'er the far times, when many a subject land
Look'd to the winged Lion's marble piles,
Where Venice sate in state, throned on her hundred isles.

She looks a sea Cybele, fresh from ocean,
Rising with her tiara of proud towers
At airy distance, with majestic motion,
A ruler of the waters and their powers :
And such she was ;—her daughters had their dowers
From spoils of nations, and the exhaustless East
Poured in her lap all gems in sparkling showers.
In purple was she robed, and of her feast
Monarchs partook, and deem'd their dignity increased.

In Venice Tasso's echoes are no more,
And silent rows the songless gondolier ;
Her palaces are crumbling to the shore,
And music meets not always now the ear :
Those days are gone—but Beauty still is here.
States fall, arts fade—but Nature doth not die,
Nor yet forget how Venice once was dear,
The pleasant place of all festivity,
The revel of the earth, the masque of Italy !

But unto us she hath a spell beyond
Her name in story, and her long array
Of mighty shadows, whose dim forms despond
Above the dogeless city's vanish'd sway ;
Ours is a trophy which will not decay
With the Rialto ; Shylock and the Moor,
And Pierre, cannot be swept or worn away—
The keystones of the arch ! though all were o'er
For us repeopled were the solitary shore.

The beings of the mind are not of clay ;
Essentially immortal, they create
And multiply in us a brighter ray
And more beloved existence : that which Fate
Prohibits to dull life, in this our state
Of mortal bondage, by these spirits supplied,
First exiles, then replaces what we hate ;
Watering the heart whose early flowers have died,
And with a fresher growth replenishing the void.

6. Such is the refuge of our youth and age,
The first from hope, the last from vacancy ;
And this worn feeling peoples many a page,
And, may be, that which grows beneath mine eye
Yet there are things whose strong reality
Outshines our fairy-land ; in shape and hues
More beautiful than our fantastic sky,
And the strange constellations which the Muse
O'er her wild universe is skilful to diffuse :

7. I saw or dreamed of such,—but let them go,—
They came like truth, and disappeared like dream
And whatsoe'er they were—are now but so :
I could replace them if I would ; still teems
My mind with many a form which aptly seems
Such as I sought for, and at moments found ;—
Let these too go—for waking Reason deems
Such over-weening phantasies unsound,
And other voices speak, and other sights surround.

8. I've taught me other tongues, and in strange eyes
Have made me not a stranger : to the mind
Which is itself, no changes bring surprise ;
Nor is it harsh to make, nor hard to find
A country with—ay, or without mankind ;
Yet was I born where men are proud to be,—
Not without cause ; and should I leave behind
The inviolate island of the sage and free,
And seek me out a home by a remoter sea,

9. Perhaps I loved it well ; and should I lay
My ashes in a soil which is not mine,
My spirit shall resume it—if we may
Unbodied choose a sanctury. I twine
My hopes of being remember'd in my line
With my land's language : if too fond and far
These aspirations in their scope incline,—
If my fame should be, as my fortunes are,
Of hasty growth and blight, and dull Oblivion bar

My name from out the temple where the dead
Are honour'd by the nations—let it be—
And light the laurels on a loftier head !
And be the Spartan's epitaph on me—
'Sparta hath many a worthier son than he.'
Meantime I seek no sympathies, nor need ;
The thorns which I have reap'd are of the tree
I planted : they have torn me, and I bleed :
I should have known what fruit would spring from such a seed

The spouseless Adriatic mourns her lord
And, annual marriage now no more renew'd,
The Bucentaur lies rotting unrestored,
Neglected garment of her widowhood !
St. Mark yet sees his lion where he stood,
Stand, but in mockery of his wither'd power,
Over the proud Place where an Emperor sued,
And monarchs gazed and envied in the hour
When Venice was a queen with an unequall'd dower.

12. The Suabian sued, and now the Austrian reigns—
An Emperor tramples where an Emperor knelt ;
Kingdoms are shrunk to provinces, and chains
Clank over sceptred cities ; nations melt
From power's high pinnacle, when they have felt
The sunshine for a while, and downward go
Like lauwine loosen'd from the mountain's belt ;
Oh for one hour of blind old Dandolo !
Th' octogenarian chief, Byzantium's conquering foe !

13. Before St. Mark still glow his steeds of brass,
Their gilded collars glittering in the sun :
But is not Doria's menace come to pass ?
Are they not *bridled?*—Venice, lost and won,
Her thirteen hundred years of freedom done,
Sinks, like a sea-weed, into whence she rose !
Better be whelm'd beneath the waves, and shun
Even in destruction's depth, her foreign foes,
From whom submission wrings an infamous repose.

14. In youth she was all glory,—a new Tyre ;
Her very by-word sprung from victory,
The 'Planter of the Lion,' which through fire
And blood she bore o'er subject earth and sea ;
Though making many slaves, herself still free,
And Europe's bulwark 'gainst the Ottomite ;
Witness Troy's rival, Candia ! Vonch it, ye
Immortal waves that saw Lepanto's fight !
For ye are names no time nor tyranny can blight.

15. Statues of glass—all shiver'd—the long file
Of her dead Doges are declined to dust ;
But where they dwelt, the vast and sumptuous pile
Bespeaks the pageant of their splendid trust ;
Their sceptre broken, and their sword in rust,
Have yielded to the stranger: empty halls,
Thin streets, and foreign aspects, such as must
Too oft remind her who and what inthrals,
Have flung a desolate cloud o'er Venice' lovely walls.

16. When Athens' armies fell at Syracuse,
And fetter'd thousands bore the yoke of war,
Redemption rose up in the Attic Muse,
Her voice their only ransom from afar :
See ! as they chant the tragic hymn, the car
Of the o'ermaster'd victor stops, the reins
Fall from his hands, his idle scimitar
Starts from its belt—he rends his captive's chains,
And bids him thank the bard for freedom and his strains.

17. Thus, Venice, if no stronger claim were thine,
Were all thy proud historic deeds forgot,
Thy choral memory of the Bard divine,
Thy love of Tasso, should have cut the knot
Which ties thee to thy tyrants ; and thy lot
Is shameful to the nations, most of all,
Albion ! to thee : the Ocean queen should not
Abandon Ocean's children ; in the fall
Of Venice think of thine, despite thy watery wall.

18. I loved her from my boyhood ; she to me
Was as a fairy city of the heart,
Rising like water-columns from the sea,
Of joy the sojourn, and of wealth the mart ;
And Otway, Radcliffe, Schiller, Shakespeare's art,
Had stamped her image in me, and even so,
Although I found her thus, we did not part ;
Perchance even dearer in her day of woe,
Than when she was a boast, a marvel, and a show.

19. I can repeople with the past—and of
The present there is still for eye and thought,
And meditation chasten'd down, enough ;
And more, it may be, than I hoped or sought ;
And of the happiest moments which were wrought,
Within the web of my existence, some
From thee, fair Venice ! have their colours caught :
These are some feelings Time cannot benumb,
Not Torture shake, or mine would now be cold and dumb.

20. But from their nature will the tannen grow
Loftiest on loftiest and least shelter'd rocks,
Rooted in barrenness, where nought below
Of soil supports them 'gainst the Alpine shocks
Of eddying storms ; yet springs the trunk, and mocks
The howling tempest, till, till its height and frame
Are worthy of the mountains from whose blocks
Of bleak, gray granite into life it came,
And grew a giant tree ;—the mind may grow the same.

21. Existence may be borne, and the deep root
Of life and sufferance make its firm abode
In bare and desolated bosoms : mute
The camel labours with the heaviest load,
And the wolf dies in silence,—not bestow'd
In vain should such example be ; if they,
Things of ignoble or of savage mood
Endure and shrink not, we of nobler clay
May temper it to bear,—it is but for a day.

22. All suffering doth destroy, or is destroy'd,
Even by the sufferer ; and, in each event,
Ends :—Some, with hope replenish'd and rebuoy'd,
Return to whence they came—with like intent,
And weave their web again ; some, bow'd and bent,
Wax gray and ghastly, withering ere their time,
And perish with the reed on which they leant,
Some seek devotion, toil, war, good, or crime,
According as their souls were form'd to sink or climb.

23. But ever and anon of griefs subdued
There comes a token like a scorpion's sting,
Scarce seen, but with fresh bitterness imbued ;
And slight withal may be the things which bring
Back on the heart the weight which it would fling
Aside for ever : it may be a sound—
A tone of music—summer's eve—or spring—
A flower—the wind—the ocean—which shall wound,
Striking the electric chain wherewith we are darkly bound ;

24. And how and why we know not, nor can trace
Home to its cloud this lightning of the mind,
But feel the shock renew'd, nor can efface
The blight and blackening which it leaves behind,
Which out of things familiar, undesign'd,
When least we deem of such, calls up to view
The spectres whom no exorcism can bind,—
The cold, the changed, perchance the dead—anew,
The mourn'd, the loved, the lost—too many !—yet how few

25. But my soul wanders; I demand it back
To meditate amongst decay, and stand
A ruin amidst ruins there to track
Fall'n states and buried greatness, o'er a land
Which *was* the mightest in its old command,
And *is* the loveliest, and must ever be
The master-mould of Nature's heavenly hand;
Wherein were cast the heroic and the free,
The beautiful, the brave, the lords of earth and sea.

26. The commonwealth of kings, the men of Rome!
And even since, and now, fair Italy!
Thou art the garden of the world, the home
Of all Art yields, and Nature can decree;
Even in thy desert, what is like to thee?
Thy very weeds are beautiful, thy waste
More rich than other climes' fertility;
Thy wreck a glory, and thy ruin graced
With an immaculate charm which cannot be defaced.

27. The moon is up, and yet it is not night;
Sunset divides the sky with her; a sea
Of glory streams along the Alpine height
Of blue Friuli's mountains; Heaven is free
From clouds, but of all colours seems to be,—
Melted to one vast Irish of the West,—
Where the Day joins the past Eternity;
While, on the other hand, meek Dian's crest
Floats through the azure air—an island of the blest!

28. A single star is at her side, and reigns
With her o'er half the lovely heaven; but still
Yon sunny sea heaves brightly, and remains
Rolled o'er the peak of the far Rhætian hill,
As Day and Night contending were, until
Nature reclaimed her order:—gently flows
The deep-dyed Brenta, where their hues instil
The odorous purple of a new-born rose,
Which streams upon her stream, and glass'd within it glows,

29. Fill'd with the face of heaven, which, from afar,
Comes down upon the waters; all its hues,
From the rich sunset to the rising star,
Their magical variety diffuse:
And now they change; a paler shadow strews
Its mantle o'er the mountains; parting day
Dies like the dolphin, whom each pang imbues
With a new colour as it gasps away,
The last still loveliest,—till—'t is gone—and all is gray.

30. There is a tomb in Arqua;—rear'd in air,
Pillar'd in their sarcophagus, repose
The bones of Laura's lover: here repair
Many familiar with his well-sung woes,
The pilgrims of his genius. He arose
To raise a language, and his land reclaim
From the dull yoke of her barbaric foes:
Watering the tree which bears his lady's name
With his melodious tears, he gave himself to fame.

31. They keep his dust in Arqua, where he died;
The mountain-village where his latter days
Went down the vale of years; and 't is their pride—
An honest pride—and let it be their praise,
To offer to the passing stranger's gaze
His mansion and his sepulchre; both plain
And venerably simple, such as raise
A feeling more accordant with his strain
Than if a pyramid formed his monumental fane.

32. And the soft quiet hamlet where he dwelt
Is one of that complexion which seems made
For those who their mortality have felt,
And sought a refuge from their hopes decay'd
In the deep umbrage of a green hill's shade,
Which shows a distant prospect far away
Of busy cities, now in vain displayed,
For they can lure no further; and the ray
Of a bright sun can make sufficient holiday,

33. Developing the mountains, leaves, and flowers,
And shining in the brawling brook, where-by,
Clear as its current, glide the sauntering hours
With a calm languor, which, though to the eye
Idlesse it seem, hath its morality.
If from society we learn to live,
'Tis solitude should teach us how to die;
It hath no flatterers; vanity can give
No hollow aid; alone—man with his God must strive

34. Or, it may be, with demons, who impair
The strength of better thoughts, and seek their prey
In melancholy bosoms, such as were
Of moody texture from their earliest day,
And loved to dwell in darkness and dismay,
Deeming themselves predestined to a doom
Which is not of the pangs that pass away;
Making the sun like blood, the earth a tomb,
The tomb a hell, and hell itself a murkier gloom.

35. Ferrara! in thy wide and grass-grown streets,
Whose symmetry was not for solitude,
There seems as 't were a curse upon the seats
Of former sovereigns, and the antique brood
Of Este, which for many an age made good
Its strength within thy walls, and was of yore
Patron or tyrant, as the changing mood
Of petty power impelled, of those who wore
The wreath which Dante's brow alone had worn before.

36. And Tasso is their glory and their shame.
Hark to his strain! and then survey his cell!
And see how dearly earned Torquato's fame,
And where Alfonso bade his poet dwell:
The miserable despot could not quell
The insulted mind he sought to quench, and blend
With the surrounding maniacs, in the hell
Where he had plunged it. Glory without end
Scatter'd the clouds away; and on that name attend

37. The tears and praises of all time; while thine
Would rot in its oblivion—in the sink
Of worthless dust, which from thy boasted line
Is shaken into nothing—but the link
Thou formest in his fortunes bids us think
Of thy poor malice, naming thee with scorn:
Alfonso! how thy ducal pageants shrink
From thee! if in another station born,
Scarce fit to be the slave of him thou madest to mourn:

38. *Thou*! form'd to eat, and be depised, and die,
Even as the beasts that perish, save that thou
Hadst a more splendid trough and wider sty:
He! with a glory round his furrow'd brow,
Which emanated then, and dazzles now,
In face of all his foes, the Cruscan quire,
And Boileau, whose rash envy could allow
No strain which shamed his country's creaking lyre,
That whetstone of the teeth—monotony in wire!

39. Peace to Torquato's injured shade! 't was his
In life and death to be the mark where Wrong
Aimed with her poison'd arrows,—but to miss.
Oh, victor unsurpass'd in modern song!
Each year brings forth its millions; but how long
The tide of generations shall roll on,
And not the whole combined and countless throng
Compose a mind like thine? though all in one
Condensed their scattered rays, they would not form a sun.

40. Great as thou art, yet parallel'd by those,
Thy countrymen, before thee born to shine,
The Bards of Hell and Chivalry: first rose
The Tuscan father's comedy divine;
Then, not unequal to the Florentine,
The southern Scott, the minstrel who called forth
A new creation with his magic line,
And, like the Ariosto of the North,
Sang lady-love and war, romance and knightly worth.

41. The lightning rent from Ariosto's bust
The iron crown of laurel's mimick'd leaves;
Nor was the ominous element unjust,
For the true laurel-wreath which Glory weaves
Is of the tree no bolt of thunder cleaves,
And the false semblance but disgraced his brow;
Yet still, if fondly Superstition grieves,
Know, that the lightning sanctifies below
Whate'er it strikes;—yon head is doubly sacred now.

42. Italia! oh Italia! thou who hast
The fatal gift of beauty, which became
A funeral dower of present woes and past,
On thy sweet brow is sorrow ploughed by shame,
And annals graved in characters of flame.
Oh, God! that thou wert in thy nakedness
Less lovely or more powerful and couldst claim
Thy right, and awe the robbers back, who press
To shed thy blood, and drink the tears of thy distress;

43. Then might'st thou more appal; or, less desired,
Be homely and be peaceful, undeplored
For thy destructive charms; then, still untired,
Would not be seen the armed torrents pour'd
Down the deep Alps; nor would the hostile horde
Of many-nationed spoilers from the Po
Quaff blood and water; nor the stranger's sword
Be thy sad weapon of defence, and so,
Victor or vanquish'd, thou the slave of friend or foe.

44. Wandering in youth, I traced the path of him,
The Roman friend of Rome's least-mortal mind,
The friend of Tully: as my bark did skim
The bright blue waters with a fanning wind,
Came Megara before me, and behind
Ægina lay, Piræus on the right,
And Corinth on the left; I lay reclined
Along the prow, and saw all these unite
In ruin, even as he had seen the desolate sight;

45. For Time hath not rebuilt them, but upreared
Barbaric dwellings on their shatter'd site,
Which only make more mourn'd and more endear'd
The few last rays of their far-scattered light,
And the crush'd relics of their vanish'd might.
The Roman saw these tombs in his own age,
These sepulchres of cities, which excite
Sad wonder, and his yet surviving page
The moral lesson bears, drawn from such pilgrimage

46. That page is now before me, and on mine
His country's ruin added to the mass
Of perish'd states he mourn'd in their decline,
And I in desolation: all that *was*
Of then destruction *is*; and now, alas!
Rome—Rome imperial, bows her to the storm,
In the same dust and blackness, and we pass
The skeleton of her Titanic form,
Wrecks of another world, whose ashes still are warm

47. Yet, Italy! through every other land
Thy wrongs should ring, and shall, from side to side;
Mother of Arts! as once of arms; thy hand
Was then our guardian, and is still our guide;
Parent of our Religion! whom the wide
Nations have knelt to for the keys of heaven!
Europe, repentant of her parricide,
Shall yet redeem thee, and, all backward driven,
Roll the barbarian tide, and sue to be forgiven.

48. But Arno wins us to the fair white walls,
Where the Etrurian Athens claims and keeps
A softer feeling for her fairy halls.
Girt by her theatre of hills, she reaps
Her corn, and wine, and oil, and Plenty leaps
To laughing life, with her redundant horn.
Along the banks where smiling Arno sweeps
Was modern Luxury of Commerce born,
And buried Learning rose, redeemed to a new morn

49. There, too, the Goddess loves in stone, and fills
The air around with beauty; we inhale
The ambrosial aspect, which, beheld, instils
Part of its immortality; the veil
Of heaven is half undrawn; within the pale
We stand, and in that form and face behold
What Mind can make, when Nature's self would fail
And to the fond idolaters of old
Envy the innate flash which such a soul could mould:

50. We gaze and turn away, and know not where,
Dazzled and drunk with beauty, till the heart
Reels with its fulness; there—for ever there—
Chain'd to the chariot of triumphal Art,
We stand as captives, and would not depart.
Away!—there need no words, nor terms precise,
The paltry jargon of the marble mart,
Where Pedantry gulls Folly—we have eyes:
Blood, pulse, and breast confirm the Dardan Shepherd's prize.

51. Appear'dst thou not to Paris in this guise?
Or to more deeply blest Anchises? or,
In all thy perfect goddess-ship, when lies
Before thee thy own vanquished Lord of War?
And gazing in thy face as toward a star,
Laid on thy lap, his eyes to thee upturn,
Feeding on thy sweet cheek! while thy lips are
With lava kisses melting while they burn,
Shower'd on his eyelids, brow, and mouth, as from an urn?

52. Glowing, and circumfused in speechless love
Their full divinity inadequate
That feeling to express, or to improve,
The gods become as mortals, and man's fate
Has moments like their brightest; but the weight
Of earth recoils upon us;—let it go!
We can recall such visions, and create,
From what has been, or might be, things which grow
Into thy statue's form, and look like gods below.

53. I leave to learned fingers, and wise hands,
The artist and his ape, to teach and tell
How well his connoisseurship understands
The graceful bend, and the voluptuous swell:
Let these describe the undescribable:
I would not their vile breath should crisp the stream
Wherein that image shall for ever dwell;
The unruffled mirror of the loveliest dream
That ever left the sky on the deep soul to beam.

54. In Santa Croce's holy precincts lie
Ashes which make it holier, dust which is
Even in itself an immortality,
Though there were nothing save the past, and this,
The particle of those sublimities
Which have relapsed to chaos: here repose
Angelo's, Alfieri's bones, and his,
The starry Galileo, with his woes;
Here Machiavelli's earth return'd to whence it rose.

55. These are four minds, which, like the elements,
Might furnish forth creation:—Italy!
Time, which hath wrong'd thee with ten thousand rents
Of thine imperial garment, shall deny,
And hath denied, to every other sky,
Spirits which soar from ruin: thy decay
Is still impregnate with divinity,
Which gilds it with revivifying ray:
Such as the great of yore, Canova is to-day.

56. But where repose the all Etruscan three—
Dante and Petrarch, and, scarce less than they,
The Bard of Prose, creative spirit! he
Of the Hundred Tales of love—where did they lay
Their bones, distinguish'd from our common clay
In death as life? Are they resolved to dust,
And have their country's marbles nought to say?
Could not her quarries furnish forth one bust?
Did they not to her breast their filial earth entrust?

57. Ungrateful Florence! Dante sleeps afar,
Like Scipio, buried by the upbraiding shore:
Thy factions, in their worse than civil war,
Proscribed the bard whose name for evermore
Their children's children would in vain adore
With the remorse of ages; and the crown
Which Petrarch's laureate brow supremely wore,
Upon a far and foreign soil had grown,
His life, his fame, his grave, though rifled—not thine own.

58. Boccaccio to his parent earth bequeath'd
His dust,—and lies it not her great among,
With many a sweet and solemn requiem breathed
O'er him who form'd the Tuscan's siren tongue?
That music in itself, whose sounds are song,
The poetry of speech? No;—even his tomb,
Uptorn, must bear the hyæna bigot's wrong,
No more amidst the meaner dead find room,
Nor claim a passing sigh, because it told for *whom*!

59. And Santa Croce wants their mighty dust;
Yet for this want more noted, as of yore
The Cæsar's pageant, shorn of Brutus' bust,
Did but of Rome's best Son remind her more:
Happier Ravenna! on thy hoary shore,
Fortress of falling empire! honour'd sleeps
The immortal exile;—Arqua, too, her store
Of tuneful relics proudly claims and keeps,
While Florence vainly begs her banish'd dead and weeps.

60. What is her pyramid of precious stones
Of porphyry, jasper, agate, and all hues
Of gem and marble, to incrust the bones
Of merchant-dukes? the momentary dews
Which, sparkling to the twilight stars, infuse
Freshness in the green turf that wraps the dead,
Whose names are mausoleums of the Muse,
Are gently prest with far more reverent tread
Than ever paced the slab which paves the princely head.

There be more things to greet the heart and eyes
In Arno's dome of Art's most princely shine,
Where Sculpture with her rainbow sister vies ;
There be more marvels yet—but not for mine ;
For I have been accustomed to entwine
My thoughts with Nature rather in the fields,
Than Art in galleries : though a work divine
Calls for my spirit's homage, yet it yields
Less than it feels, because the weapon which it wields

Is of another temper, and I roam
By Thrasimene's lake, in the defiles
Fatal to Roman rashness, more at home ;
For there the Carthaginian's warlike wiles
Come back before me, as his skill beguiles
The host between the mountains and the shore,
Where Courage falls in her despairing files,
And torrents, swoll'n to rivers with their gore,
Reek through the sultry plain, with legends scatter'd o'er,

Like to a forest fell'd by mountain winds ;
And such the storm of battle on this day,
And such the frenzy, whose convulsion blinds
To all save carnage, that, beneath the fray,
An earthquake reel'd unheededly away !
None felt stern Nature rocking at his feet,
And yawning forth a grave for those who lay
Upon their bucklers for a winding-sheet ;
Such is the absorbing hate when warring nations meet !

The Earth to them was as a rolling bark
Which bore them to Eternity ; they saw
The Ocean round, but had no time to mark
The motions of their vessel ; Nature's law,
In them suspended, reck'd not of the awe
Which reigns when mountains tremble, and the birds
Plunge in the clouds for refuge, and withdraw
From their down-toppling nests ; and bellowing herds
Stumble o'er heaving plains, and man's dread hath no words.

65. Far other scene is Thrasimene now;
Her lake a sheet of silver, and her plain
Rent by no ravage save the gentle plough;
Her aged trees rise thick as once the slain
Lay where their roots are; but a brook hath ta'en—
A little rill of scanty stream and bed—
A name of blood from that day's sanguine rain;
And Sanguinetto tells ye where the dead
Made the earth wet, and turn'd the unwilling waters red.

66. But thou, Clitumnus! in thy sweetest wave
Of the most living crystal that was e'er
The haunt of river nymph, to gaze and lave
Her limbs where nothing hid them, thou dost rear
Thy grassy banks whereon the milk-white steer
Grazes; the purest god of gentle waters!
And most serene of aspect, and most clear;
Surely that stream was unprofaned by slaughters;
A mirror and a bath for Beauty's youngest daughters!

67. And on thy happy shore a Temple still,
Of small and delicate proportion, keeps,
Upon a mild declivity of hill,
Its memory of thee; beneath it sweeps
Thy current's calmness; oft from out it leaps
The finny darter with the glittering scales,
Who dwells and revels in thy glassy deeps;
While, chance, some scatter'd water-lily sails
Down where the shallower wave still tells its bubbling tales

68. Pass not unblest the Genius of the place!
If through the air a zephyr more serene
Win to the brow, 'tis his; and if ye trace
Along his margin a more eloquent green,
If on the heart the freshness of the scene
Sprinkle its coolness, and from the dry dust
Of weary life a moment lave it clean
With Nature's baptism—'tis to him ye must
Pay orisons for this suspension of disgust.

The roar of waters!—from the headlong height
Velino cleaves the wave-worn precipice;
The fall of waters! rapid as the light
The flashing mass foams shaking the abyss;
The hell of waters! where they howl and hiss,
And boil in endless torture; while the sweat
Of their great agony, wrung out from this
Their Phlegethon, curls round the rocks of jet
That gird the gulf around, in pitiless horror set,

And mounts in spray the skies, and thence again
Returns in an unceasing shower, which round,
With its unemptied cloud of gentle rain,
Is an eternal April to the ground,
Making it all one emerald:—how profound
The gulf! and how the giant element
From rock to rock leaps with delirious bound,
Crushing the cliffs, which, downward worn and rent
With his fierce footsteps, yield in chasms a fearful vent!

To the broad column which rolls on, and shows
More like the fountain of an infant sea
Torn from the womb of mountains by the throes
Of a new world, than only thus to be
Parent of rivers, which flow gushingly,
With many windings, through the vale:—Look back!
Lo! where it comes like an eternity,
As if to sweep down all things in its track,
Charming the eye with dread,—a matchless cataract,

Horribly beautiful! but on the verge,
From side to side, beneath the glittering morn,
An Iris sits, amidst the infernal surge,
Like Hope upon a death-bed, and, unworn
Its steady dies, while all around is torn
By the distracted waters, bears serene
Its brilliant hues with all their beams unshorn:
Resembling, 'mid the torture of the scene,
Love watching Madness with unalterable mien.

73. Once more upon the woody Apennine,
The infant Alps, which—had I not before
Gazed on their mightier parents, where the pine
Sits on more shaggy summits, and where roar
The thundering lauwine—might be worshipp'd more;
But I have seen the soaring Jungfrau rear
Her never-trodden snow, and seen the hoar
Glaciers of bleak Mont Blanc both far and near,
And in Chimari heard the thunder-hills of fear,

74. Th' Acroceraunian mountains of old name;
And on Parnassus seen the eagles fly
Like spirits of the spot, as 'twere for fame,
For still they soared unutterably high:
I've look'd on Ida with a Trojan's eye;
Athos, Olympus, Ætna, Atlas, made
These hills seen things of lesser dignity,
All, save the lone Soracte's height, display'd
Not *now* in snow, which asks the lyric Roman's aid

75. For our remembrance, and from out the plain
Heaves like a long-swept wave about to break,
And on the curl hangs pausing: not in vain
May he, who will, his recollections rake,
And quote in classic raptures, and awake
The hills with Latian echoes; I abhorr'd
Too much, to conquer for the poet's sake,
The drill'd dull lesson, forced down word by word
In my repugnant youth, with pleasure to record

76. Aught that recalls the daily drug which turn'd
My sickening memory; and, though Time hath taught
My mind to meditate what then it learn'd,
Yet such the fix'd inveteracy wrought
By the impatience of my early thought,
That, with the freshness wearing out before
My mind could relish what it might have sought,
If free to choose, I cannot now restore
Its health; but what it then detested, still abhor.

Then farewell, Horace; whom I hated so,
Not for thy faults, but mine; it is a curse
To understand, not feel thy lyric flow,
To comprehend, but never love thy verse:
Although no deeper Moralist rehearse
Our little life, nor Bard prescribe his art,
Nor livelier Satirist the conscience pierce,
Awakening without wounding the touch'd heart,
Yet fare thee well—upon Soracte's ridge we part.

Oh Rome! my country! City of the soul!
The orphans of the heart must turn to thee,
Lone mother of dead empires! and control
In their shut breasts their petty misery.
What are our woes and sufferance? Come and see
The cypress, hear the owl, and plod your way
O'er steps of broken thrones and temples, Ye!
Whose agonies are evils of a day—
A world is at our feet as fragile as our clay.

The Niobe of nations! there she stands,
Childless and crownless, in her voiceless woe;
An empty urn within her wither'd hands,
Whose holy dust was scatter'd long ago;
The Scipios' tomb contains no ashes now;
The very sepulchres lie tenantless
Of their heroic dwellers: dost thou flow,
Old Tiber! through a marble wilderness?
Rise, with thy yellow waves, and mantle her distress.

The Goth, the Christian, Time, War, Flood, and Fire,
Have dwelt upon the seven-hilled city's pride;
She saw her glories star by star expire,
And up the steep barbarian monarchs ride,
Where the car climb'd the Capitol; far and wide
Temple and tower went down, nor left a site:
Chaos of ruins! who shall trace the void,
O'er the dim fragments cast a lunar light,
And say, 'here was, or is,' where all is doubly night?

81 The double night of ages, and of her,
Night's daughter, Ignorance, hath wrapt and wrap
All round us; we but feel our way to err:
The ocean hath his chart, the stars their map,
And Knowledge spreads them on her ample lap;
But Rome is as the desert, where we steer
Stumbling o'er recollections; now we clap
Our hands, and cry 'Eureka'! it is clear—
When but some false mirage of ruin rises near.

82. Alas! the lofty city! and alas!
The trebly hundred triumphs! and the day
When Brutus made the dagger's edge surpass
The conqueror's sword in bearing fame away!
Alas, for Tully's voice, and Virgil's lay,
And Livy's pictured page!—but these shall be
Her resurrection; all beside—decay.
Alas, for Earth, for never shall we see
That brightness in her eye she bore when Rome was free!

83. Oh thou, whose chariot roll'd on Fortune's wheel,
Triumphant Sylla! Thou, who didst subdue
Thy country's foes ere thou wouldst pause to feel
The wrath of thy own wrongs, or reap the due
Of hoarded vengeance till thine eagles flew
O'er prostrate Asia;—thou, who with thy frown
Annihilated senates—Roman, too,
With all thy vices for thou didst lay down
With an atoning smile a more than earthly crown—

84. The dictatorial wreath—couldst thou divine
To what would one day dwindle that which made
Thee more than mortal? and that so supine
By aught than Romans Rome should thus be laid?
She who was named eternal, and array'd
Her warriors but to conquer—she who veil'd
Earth with her haughty shadow, and display'd,
Until the o'er-canopied horizon fail'd,
Her rushing wings—Oh! she who was Almighty hail'd

Sylla was first of victors ; but our own,
The sagest of usurpers, Cromwell !—he
Too swept off senates while he hew'd the throne
Down to a block—immortal rebel ! See
What crimes it costs to be a moment free,
And famous through all ages ! but beneath
His fate the moral lurks of destiny ;
His day of double victory and death
Beheld him win two realms, and happier, yield his breath.

The third of the same moon whose former course
Had all but crown'd him, on the selfsame day
Deposed him gently from his throne of force,
And laid him with the earth's preceding clay.
And show'd not Fortune thus how fame and sway,
And all we deem delightful, and consume
Our souls to compass through each arduous way,
Are in her eyes less happy than the tomb ?
Were they but so in man's, how different were his doom !

And thou, dread statue ! yet existent in
The austerest form of naked majesty,
Thou who beheldst, 'mid the assassin's din,
At thy bathed base the bloody Cæsar lie,
Folding his robe in dying dignity,
An offering to thine altar from the queen
Of gods and men, great Nemesis ! did he die,
And thou, too, perish, Pompey ? have ye been
Victors of countless kings, or puppets of a scene ?

And thou, the thunder-stricken nurse of Rome !
She-wolf ! whose brazen-imaged dugs impart
The milk of conquest yet within the dome
Where, as a monument of antique art,
Thou standest :—Mother of the mighty heart,
Which the great founder suck'd from thy wild teat,
Scorch'd by the Roman Jove's ethereal dart,
And thy limbs black with lightning—dost thou yet
Guard thine immortal cubs, nor thy fond charge forget ?

Thou dost ; but all thy foster-babes are dead—
The men of iron : and the world hath rear'd
Cities from out their sepulchres : men bled
In imitation of the things they fear'd,
And fought and conquer'd, and the same course steer'd,
At apish distance ; but as yet none have,
Nor could, the same supremacy have near'd,
Save one vain man, who is not in the grave,
But, vanquish'd by himself, to his own slaves a slave—

The fool of false dominion—and a kind
Of bastard Cæsar, following him of old
With steps unequal ; for the Roman's mind
Was modell'd in a less terrestrial mould,
With passions fiercer, yet a judgment cold,
And an immortal instinct which redeem'd
The frailties of a heart so soft, yet bold,
Alcides with the distaff now he seem'd
Cleopatra's feet, and now himself he beam'd,

And came—and saw—and conquer'd ! But the man
Who would have tamed his eagles down to flee,
Like a train'd falcon, in the Gallic van,
Which he, in sooth, long led to victory,
With a deaf heart which never seem'd to be
A listener to itself, was strangely framed ;
With but one weakest weakness—vanity,
Coquettish in ambition, still he aim'd—
At what ? can he avouch or answer what he claim'd ?

And would be all or nothing—nor could wait
For the sure grave to level him ; few years
Had fix'd him with the Cæsars in his fate,
On whom we tread : For *this* the conqueror rears
The arch of triumph ! and for this the tears
And blood of earth flow on as they have flow'd,
An universal deluge, which appears
Without an ark for wretched man's abode,
And ebbs but to reflow ! Renew thy rainbow, God !

What from this barren being do we reap?
Our senses narrow, and our reason frail,
Life short, and truth a gem which loves the deep,
And all things weigh'd in custom's falsest scale;
Opinion an omnipotence,—whose veil
Mantles the earth with darkness, until right
And wrong are accidents, and men grow pale
Lest their own judgments should become too bright,
And their free thoughts be crimes, and earth have too much light.

And thus they plod in sluggish misery,
Rotting from sire to son, and age to age,
Proud of their trampled nature, and so die,
Bequeathing their hereditary rage
To the new race of inborn slaves, who wage
War for their chains, and rather than be free,
Bleed gladiator-like, and still engage
Within the same arena where they see
Their fellows fall before, like leaves of the same tree.

I speak not of men's creeds—they rest between
Man and his Maker—but of things allow'd,
Averr'd, and known, and daily, hourly seen—
The yoke that is upon as doubly bow'd,
And the intent of tyranny avowed,
The edict of Earth's rulers, who are grown
The apes of him who humbled once the proud,
And shook them from their slumbers on the throne:
Too glorious, were this all his mighty arm had done.

Can tyrants but by tyrants conquer'd be,
And Freedom find no champion and no child
Such as Columbia saw arise when she
Sprung forth a Pallas, arm'd and undefiled?
Or must such minds be nourished in the wild,
Deep in the unpruned forest 'midst the roar
Of cataracts, where nursing Nature smiled
On infant Washington? Has Earth no more
Such seeds within her breast, or Europe no such shore?

97. But France got drunk with blood to vomit crime,
And fatal have her Saturnalia been
To Freedom's cause, in every age and clime;
Because the deadly days which we have seen,
And vile Ambition, that built up between
Man and his hopes an adamantine wall,
And the base pageant last upon the scene,
Are grown the pretext for the eternal thrall
Which nips life's tree, and dooms man's worst—his second fall.

98. Yet, Freedom! yet thy banner, torn, but flying,
Streams like the thunder-storm *against* the wind;
Thy trumpet voice, though broken now and dying,
The loudest still the tempest leaves behind;
Thy tree hath lost its blossoms, and the rind,
Chopped by the axe, looks rough and little worth,
But the sap lasts,—and still the seed we find
Sown deep, even in the bosom of the North;
So shall a better spring less bitter fruit bring forth.

99. There is a stern round tower of other days,
Firm as a fortress, with its fence of stone,
Such as an army's baffled strength delays,
Standing with half its battlements alone,
And with two thousand years of ivy grown,
The garland of eternity, where wave
The green leaves over all by time o'erthrown:—
What was this tower of strength? within its cave
What treasure lay so lock'd, so hid?—A woman's grave.

100. But who was she, the lady of the dead,
Tomb'd in a palace? Was she chaste and fair?
Worthy a king's or more—a Roman's bed?
What race of chiefs and heroes did she bear?
What daughter of her beauties was the heir?
How lived, how loved, how died she? Was she not
So honoured—and conspicuously there,
Where meaner relics must not dare to rot,
Placed to commemorate a more than mortal lot?

Was she as those who love their lords, or they
Who love the lords of others? such have been
Even in the olden time, Rome's annals say.
Was she a matron of Cornelia's mien,
Or the light air of Egypt's graceful queen,
Profuse of joy—or 'gainst it did she war,
Inveterate in virtue? Did she lean
To the soft side of the heart, or wisely bar
Love from amongst her griefs?—for such the affections are.

Perchance she died in youth; it may be, bow'd
With woes far heavier than the ponderous tomb
That weigh'd upon her gentle dust, a cloud
Might gather o'er her beauty, and a gloom
In her dark eye, prophetic of the doom
Heaven gives its favourites—early death; yet shed
A sunset charm around her, and illume
With hectic light, the Hesperus of the dead,
Of her consuming cheek the autumnal leaf-like red.

Perchance she died in age—surviving all,
Charms, kindred, children—with the silver gray
On her long tresses, which might yet recall,
It may be, still a something of the day
When they were braided, and her proud array
And lovely form were envied, praised, and eyed
By Rome—But whither would Conjecture stray?
Thus much alone we know—Metella died,
The wealthiest Roman's wife: Behold his love or pride!

I know not why—but standing thus by thee
It seems as if I had thine inmate known,
Thou Tomb, and other days come back on me
With recollected music, though the tone
Is changed and solemn, like the cloudy groan
Of dying thunder on the distant wind;
Yet could I seat me by this ivied stone
Till I had bodied forth the heated mind
Forms from the floating wreck which Ruin leaves behind;

105. And from the planks, far shatter'd o'er the rocks,
Built me a little bark of hope, once more
To battle with the ocean and the shocks
Of the loud breakers, and the ceaseless roar
Which rushes on the solitary shore
Where all lies founder'd that was ever dear:
But could I gather from the wave-worn store
Enough for my rude boat, where should I steer?
There woos no home, nor hope, nor life, save what is here.

106. Then let the winds howl on! their harmony
Shall henceforth be my music, and the night
The sound shall temper with the owlets' cry
As I now hear them, in the fading light
Dim o'er the bird of darkness' native site,
Answering each other on the Palatine,
With their large eyes, all glistening gray and bright,
And sailing pinions.—Upon such a shrine
What are our petty griefs?—let me not number mine.

107. Cypress and ivy, weed and wallflower grown
Matted and mass'd together, hillocks heap'd
On what were chambers, arch crush'd, column strown
In fragments, choked up vaults, and frescos steep'd
In subterranean damps, where the owl peep'd,
Deeming it midnight:—Temples, baths, or halls?
Pronounce who can; for all that Learning reap'd
From her research hath been, that these are walls—
Behold the Imperial Mount! 'tis thus the mighty falls.

108. There is the moral of all human tales;
'Tis but the same rehearsal of the past,
First Freedom and then Glory—when that fails,
Wealth, vice, corruption,—barbarism at last.
And History, with all her volumes vast,
Hath but *one* page—'tis better written here
Where gorgeous Tyranny hath thus amass'd
All treasures, all delights, that eye or ear,
Heart, soul could seek, tongue ask—Away with words! draw near,

Admire, exult, despise, laugh, weep,—for here
There is such matter for all feeling :—Man !
Thou pendulum betwixt a smile and tear !
Ages and realms are crowded in this span,
This mountain, whose obliterated plan
The pyramid of empires pinnacled,
Of Glory's gewgaws shining in the van
Till the sun's rays with added flame were fill'd !
Where are its golden roofs ? where those who dared to build ?

Tully was not so eloquent as thou,
Thou nameless column with the buried base !
What are the laurels of the Cæsar's brow ?
Crown me with ivy from his dwelling place.
Whose arch or pillar meets me in the face,
Titus or Trajan's ? No—'tis that of Time :
Triumph, arch, pillar, all he doth displace
Scoffing ; and apostolic statues climb
To crush the imperial urn, whose ashes slept sublime,

Buried in air, the deep blue sky of Rome,
And looking to the stars : they had contain'd
A spirit which with these would find a home,
The last of those who o'er the whole earth reign'd,
The Roman globe, for after none sustain'd,
But yielded back his conquests :—he was more
Than a mere Alexander, and, unstain'd
With household blood and wine, serenely wore
His sovereign virtues—still we Trajan's name adore.

Where is the rock of Triumph, the high place
Where Rome embraced her heroes ? where the steep
Tarpeian, fittest goal of Treason's race,
The promontory whence the Traitor's Leap
Cured all ambition. Did the conquerors heap
Their spoils here ? Yes ; and in yon field below
A thousand years of silenced factions sleep—
The Forum, where the immortal accents glow,
And still the eloquent air breathes—burns with Cicero !

113. The field of freedom, faction, fame, and blood:
Here a proud people's passions were exhaled,
From the first hour of empire in the bud
To that when further worlds to conquer fail'd;
But long before had Freedom's face been veil'd,
And Anarchy assumed her attributes;
Till every lawless soldier who assail'd
Trod on the trembling senate's slavish mutes,
Or raised the venal voice of baser prostitutes.

114. Then turn we to her latest tribune's name,
From her ten thousand tyrants turn to thee,
Redeemer of dark centuries of shame—
The friend of Petrarch—hope of Italy—
Rienzi! last of Romans! While the tree
Of freedom's wither'd trunk puts forth a leaf,
Even for thy tomb a garland let it be—
The forum's champion, and the people's chief—
Her new-born Numa thou—with reign, alas! too brief.

115. Egeria! sweet creation of some heart
Which found no mortal resiting-place so fair
As thine ideal breast; whate'er thou art
Or wert,—a young Aurora of the air,
The nympholepsy of some fond despair;
Or, it might be, a beauty of the earth,
Who found a more than common votary there
Too much adoring; whatsoe'er thy birth,
Thou wert a beautiful thought, and softly bodied forth.

116. The mosses of thy fountain still are sprinkled
With thine Elysian water-drops; the face
Of thy cave-guarded spring, with years unwrinkled,
Reflects the meek-eyed genius of the place,
Whose green, wild margin now no more erase
Art's works; nor must the delicate waters sleep,
Prison'd in marble; bubbling from the base
Of the cleft statue, with a gentle leap
The rill runs o'er, and round fern, flowers, and ivy creep,

Fantastically tangled: the green hills
Are clothed with early blossoms, through the grass
The quick-eyed lizard rustles, and the bills
Of summer-birds sing welcome as ye pass;
Flowers fresh in hue, and many in their class,
Implore the pausing step, and with their dyes
Dance in the soft breeze in a fairy mass;
The sweetness of the violet's deep blue eyes,
Kiss'd by the breath of heaven seems colour'd by its sk

Here didst thou dwell, in this enchanted cover,
Egeria! thy all heavenly bosom beating
For the far footsteps of thy mortal lover!
The purple Midnight veil'd that mystic meeting
With her most starry canopy, and seating
Thyself by thine adorer, what befell?
This cave was surely shaped out for the greeting
Of an enamour'd Goddess, and the cell
Haunted by holy Love—the earliest oracle!

And didst thou not, thy breast to his replying,
Blend a celestial with a human heart;
And Love, which dies as it was born, in sighing,
Share with immortal transports? could thine art
Make them indeed immortal, and impart
The purity of heaven to earthly joys,
Expel the venom and not blunt the dart—
The dull satiety which all destroys—
And root from out the soul the deadly weed which clo

Alas! our young affections run to waste,
Or water but the desert; whence arise
But weeds of dark luxuriance, tares of haste,
Rank at the core, though tempting to the eyes
Flowers whose wild odours breathe but agonies,
And trees whose gums are poison; such the plants
Which spring beneath her steps as Passion flies
O'er the world's wilderness, and vainly pants
For some celestial fruit forbidden to our wants.

121. Oh Love! no habit of earth thou art—
An unseen seraph, we believe in thee,—
A faith whose martyrs are the broken heart,—
But never yet hath seen, nor e'er shall see
The naked eye, thy form, as it should be;
The mind hath made thee, as it peopled heaven,
Even with its own desiring phantasy,
And to a thought such shape and image given,
As haunts the unquench'd soul—parch'd, wearied, wrung and riven.

122 Of its own beauty is the mind diseased,
And fevers into false creation Where,
Where are the forms the sculptor's soul hath seized?
In him alone Can nature show so fair?
Where are the charms and virtues which we dare
Conceive in boyhood and pursue as men,
The unreach'd Paradise of our despair,
Which o'er-informs the pencil and the pen,
And overpowers the page where it would bloom again?

123. Who loves, raves—'tis youth's frenzy—but the cure
Is bitterer still, as charm by charm unwinds
Which robed our idols, and we see too sure
Nor worth nor beauty dwells from out the mind's
Ideal shape of such; yet still it binds
The fatal spell, and still it draws us on,
Reaping the whirlwind from the oft-sown winds;
The stubborn heart, its alchemy begun,
Seems ever near the prize—wealthiest when most undone.

124. We wither from our youth, we gasp away—
Sick—sick; unfound the boon, unslaked the thirst,
Though to the last, in verge of our decay,
Some phantom lures, such as we sought at first—
But all too late,—so are we doubly curst.
Love, fame, ambition, avarice—'tis the same,
Each idle, and all ill, and none the worst—
For all are meteors with a different name,
And Death the sable smoke where vanishes the flame.

Few—none—find what they love or could have loved.
Though accident, blind contact, and the strong
Necessity of loving, have removed
Antipathies—but to recur, ere long,
Envenom'd with irrevocable wrong ;
And Circumstance, that unspiritual god
And miscreator, makes and helps along
Our coming evils with a crutch-like rod,
Whose touch turns hope to dust,—the dust we all have trod.

126. Our life is a false nature : 'tis not in
The harmony of things,—this hard decree,
This uneradicable taint of sin,
This boundless upas, this all-blasting tree,
Whose root is earth, whose leaves and branches be
The skies which rain their plagues on men like dew—
Disease, death, bondage—all the woes we see,
And worse, the woes we see not—which throb through
The immedicable soul, with heart-aches ever new.

127. Yet let us ponder boldly—'tis a base
Abandonment of reason to resign
Our right of thought—our last and only place
Of refuge ; this at least, shall still be mine :
Though from our birth the faculty divine
Is chain'd and tortur'd—cabin'd, cribb'd, confined,
And bred in darkness, lest the truth should shine
Too brightly on the unprepared mind,
The beam pours in, for time and skill will couch the blind

128. Arches on arches ! as it were that Rome,
Collecting the chief trophies of her line,
Would build up all her triumphs in one dome,
Her Coliseum stands ; the moonbeams shine
As 'twere its natural torches, for divine
Should be the light which streams here to illume
This long-explored but still exhaustless mine
Of contemplation ; and the azure gloom
Of an Italian night, where the deep skies assume

129. Hues which have words, and speak to ye of heaven,
Floats o'er this vast and wondrous monument,
And shadows forth its glory. There is given
Unto the things of earth, which time hath bent,
A spirit's feeling, and where he hath leant
His hand, but broke his scythe, there is a power
And magic in the ruin'd battlement,
For which the palace of the present hour
Must yield its pomp, and wait till ages are its dower.

130. Oh Time, the beautifier of the dead,
Adorner of the ruin, comforter
And only healer when the heart hath bled!
Time! the corrector where our judgments err,
The test of truth, love—sole philosopher,
For all beside are sophists—from thy thrift,
Which never loses though it doth defer—
Time, the avenger! unto thee I lift
My hands, and eyes, and heart, and crave of thee a gift:

131. Amidst this wreck, where thou hast made a shrine
And temple more divinely desolate,
Among thy mightier offerings here are mine,
Ruins of years, though few, yet full of fate:
If thou hast ever seen me too elate,
Hear me not: but if calmly I have borne
Good, and reserved my pride against the hate
Which shall not whelm me, let me not have worn
This iron in my soul in vain—shall *they* not mourn?

132. And thou, who never yet of human wrong
Left the unbalanced scale, great Nemesis!
Here, where the ancient paid thee homage long—
Thou, who dist call the Furies from the abyss,
And round Orestes bade them howl and hiss
For that unnatural retribution—just,
Had it but been from hands less near—in this
Thy former realm, I call thee from the dust!
Dost thou not hear my heart?—Awake! thou shalt, and must.

It is not that I may not have incurr'd
For my ancestral faults or mine the wound
I bleed withal, and had it been conferr'd
With a just weapon, it had flow'd unbound ;
But now my blood shall not sink in the ground ;
To thee I do devote it—*thou* shalt take
The vengeance, which shall yet be sought and found
Which if *I* have not taken for the sake—
But let that pass—I sleep, but thou shalt yet awake.

And if my voice break forth, 'tis not that now
I shrink from what is suffer'd : let him speak
Who hath beheld decline upon my brow,
Or seen my mind's convulsion leave it weak ;
But in this page a record will I seek.
Not in the air shall these my words disperse,
Though I be ashes ; a far hour shall wreak
The deep prophetic fulness of this verse,
And pile on human heads the mountain of my curse !

That curse shall be Forgiveness.—Have I not—
Hear me, my mother Earth ! behold it Heaven !—
Have I not had to wrestle with my lot ?
Have I not suffer'd things to be forgiven ?
Have I not had my brain sear'd, my heart riven,
Hopes sapp'd, name blighted, Life's life lied away ?
And only not to desperation driven
Because not altogether of such clay
As rots into the souls of those whom I survey.

From mighty wrongs to petty perfidy
Have I not seen what human things could do ?
From the loud roar of foaming calumny
To the small whisper of the as paltry few,
And subtler venom of the reptile crew,
The Janus glance of whose significant eye,
Learning to lie with silence, would *seem* true,
And without utterance, save the shrug or sigh,
Deal round to happy fools its speechless obloquy.

137. But I have lived, and have not lived in vain :
My mind may lose its force, my blood its fire,
And my frame perish even in conquering pain ;
But there is that within me which shall tire
Torture and Time, and breathe when I expire ;
Something unearthly, which they deem not of,
Like the remember'd tone of a mute lyre,
Shall on their soften'd spirits sink, and move
hearts all rocky now the late remorse of love.

138. The seal is set.—Now welcome, thou dread power,
Nameless, yet thus omnipotent, which here
Walk'st in the shadow of the midnight hour
With a deep awe, yet all distinct from fear ;
Thy haunts are ever where the dead walls rear
Their ivy mantles, and the solemn scene
Derives from thee a sense so deep and clear
That we become a part of what has been,
And grow unto the spot, all-seeing but unseen.

139. And here the buzz of eager nations ran,
In murmur'd pity, or loud-roar'd applause,
As man was slaughter'd by his fellow man.
And wherefore slaughter'd ? wherefore, but because
Such were the bloody Circus' genial laws,
And the imperial pleasure.—Wherefore not ?
What matters where we fall to fill the maws
Of worms—on battle-plains or listed spot ?
Both are but theatres where the chief actors rot.

140. I see before me the Gladiator lie :
He leans upon his hands—his manly brow
Consents to death, but conquers agony,
And his droop'd head sinks gradually low—
And through his side the last drops, ebbing slow
From the red gash, fall heavy, one by one,
Like the first of a thunder-shower ; and now
The arena swims around him—he is gone,
Ere ceased the inhuman shout which hail'd the wretch who won

He heard it, but he heeded not—his eyes
Were with his heart, and that was far away ;
He reck'd not of the life he lost nor prize,
But where his rude hut by the Danube lay,
There were his young barbarians all at play,
There was their Dacian mother—he, their sire,
Butcher'd to make a Roman holiday—
All this rush'd with his blood—Shall he expire
And unavenged ? Arise ! ye Goths, and glut your ire !

But here, where Murder breathed her bloody steam ;
And here, where buzzing nations choked the ways,
And roar'd or murmur'd like a mountain stream
Dashing or winding as its torrent strays ;
Here, where the Roman million's blame or praise
Was death or life, the playthings of a crowd,
My voice sounds much—and fall the stars' faint rays
On the arena void—seats crush'd—walls bow'd—
And galleries, where my steps seem echoes strangely loud.

A ruin—yet what ruin ! from its mass
Walls, palaces, half-cities, have been rear'd ;
Yet oft the enormous skeleton ye pass,
And marvel where the spoil could have appear'd.
Hath it indeed been plunder'd, or but clear'd ?
Alas ! devoloped, opens the decay,
When the colossal fabric's form is near'd :
It will not bear the brightness of the day,
Which streams too much on all years, man, have reft away.

But when the rising moon begins to climb
Its topmost arch, and gently pauses there ;
When the stars twinkle through the loops of time,
And the low night-breeze waves along the air
The garland-forest, which the gray walls wear,
Like laurels on the bald first Cæsar's head ;
When the light shines serene but doth not glare,
Then in this magic circle raise the dead :
Heroes have trod this spot—'tis on their dust ye tread.

145. 'While stands the Coliseum, Rome shall stand ;
'When falls the Coliseum, Rome shall fall,
And when Rome falls—the World.' From our own land
'Thus spake the pilgrims o'er this mighty wall
In Saxon times, which we are wont to call
Ancient ; and these three mortal things are still
On their foundations, and unalter'd all ;
Rome and her Ruin past Redemption's skill,
The World, the same wide den—of thieves, or what ye will.

146. Simple, erect, severe, austere, sublime—
Shrine of all saints and temple of all gods,
From Jove to Jesus—spared and blessed by time ;
Looking tranquillity, while falls or nods
Arch, empire, each thing round thee, and man plods
His way through thorns to ashes—glorious dome !
Shalt thou not last ? Time's scythe and tyrants' rods
Shiver upon thee—sanctuary and home
Of art and piety—Pantheon !—pride of Rome !

147. Relic of nobler days, and noblest arts !
Despoil'd yet perfect, with thy circle spreads
A holiness appealing to all hearts—
To art a model ; and to him who treads
Rome for the sake of ages, Glory sheds
Her light through thy sole aperture ; to those
Who worship, here are altars for their heads ;
And they who feel for genius may repose
Their eyes on honour'd forms, whose busts around them close.

148. There is a dungeon, in whose dim drear light
What do I gaze on ? Nothing ; Look again !
Two forms are slowly shadow'd on my sight—
Two insulated phantoms of the brain :
It is not so ; I see them full and plain—
An old man, and a female young and fair,
Fresh as a nursing mother, in whose vein
The blood is nectar :—But what doth she there,
With her unmantled neck, and bosom white and bare ?

149. Full swells the deep pure fountain of young life,
Where *on* the heart *from* the heart we took
Our first and sweetest nature, when the wife,
Blest into mother, in the innocent look
Or even the piping cry of lips that brook
No pain, and small suspense, a joy perceives
Man knows not, when from out its cradled nook
She sees her little bud put forth its leaves—
What may the fruit be yet? I know not—Cain was Eve's.

150. But here youth offers to old age the food,
The milk of his own gift: it is her sire
To whom she renders back the debt of blood
Born with her birth. No; he shall not expire
While in those warm and lovely veins the fire
Of health and holy feeling can provide
Great Nature's Nile, whose deep stream risees higher
Than Egypt's river: from that gentle side
Drink, drink and live, old man! Heaven's realm holds no such tide.

151. The starry fable of the milky way
Has not thy story's purity: it is
A constellation of a sweeter ray,
And sacred Nature triumphs more in this
Reverse of her decree, than in the abyss
Where sparkle distant worlds:—Oh, holiest nurse!
No drop of that clear stream its way shall miss
To thy sire's heart, replenishing its source
With life, as our freed souls rejoin the universe.

152. Turn to the mole which Hadrian rear'd on high,
Imperial mimic of old Egypt's piles,
Colossal copyist of deformity,
Whose travell'd phantasy from the far Nile's
Enormous model, doom'd the artist's toils
To build for giants, and for his vain earth,
His shrunken ashes, raise this doom: How smiles
The gazer's eye with philosophic mirth,
To view the huge design which sprung from such a birth!

153. But lo ! the dome—the vast and wondrous dome,
To which Diana's marvel was a cell—
Christ's mighty shrine above his martyr's tomb !
I have beheld the Ephesian's miracle ;—
Its columns strew the wilderness and dwell
The hyæna and the jackal in their shade ;
I have beheld Sophia's bright roofs swell
Their glittering mass i' the sun, and have survey'd
Its sanctuary the while the usurping Moslem pray'd ;

154. But thou, of temples old, or altars new,
Standest alone, with nothing like to thee—
Worthiest of God the holy and the true.
Since Zion's desolation, when that He
Forsook his former city, what could be,
Of earthly structures, in his honour piled,
Of a sublimer aspect ? Majesty,
Power, Glory, Strength, and Beauty all are aisled
In this eternal ark of workship undefiled.

155. Enter : its grandeur overwhelms thee not ;
And why ? it is not lessen'd ; but thy mind,
Expanded by the genius of the spot,
Has grown colossal, and can only find
A fit abode wherein appear enshrined
Thy hopes of immortality ; and thou
Shalt one day, if found worthy, so defined,
See thy God face to face, as thou dost now
His Holy of Holies, nor be blasted by his brow.

156. Thou movest, but increasing with the advance,
Like climbing some great Alp, which still both rise,
Deceived by its gigantic elegance ;
Vastness which grows, but grows to harmonise—
All musical in its immensities ;
Rich marbles, richer painting—shrines where flame
The lamps of gold—and haughty dome which vies
In air with Earth's chief structures, though their frame
Sits on the firm-set ground, and this the clouds must claim.

57. Thou seest not all ; but piecemeal thou must break,
To separate contemplation, the great whole ;
And as the ocean many bays will make
That ask the eye—so here condense thy soul
To more immediate objects, and control
Thy thoughts until thy mind hath got by heart
Its eloquent proportions, and unroll
In mighty graduations, part by part,
The glory which at once upon thee did not dart,

158. Not by its fault—but thine : Our outward sense
Is but of gradual grasp—and as it is
That what we have of feeling most intense
Outstrips our faint expression ; even so this
Outshining and o'erwhelming edifice
Fools our fond gaze, and greatest of the great
Defies at first our Nature's littleness,
Till, growing with its growth, we thus dilate
Our spirits to the size of that they contemplate.

159. Then pause, and be enlighten'd ; there is more
In such a survey than the sating gaze
Of wonder pleased, or awe which would adore
The worship of the place, or the mere praise
Of art and its great masters, who could raise
What former time, nor skill, nor thought could plan ;
The fountain of sublimity displays
Its depth, and thence may draw the mind of man
Its golden sands, and learn what great conceptions can.

160. Or, turning to the Vatican, go see
Laocoon's torture dignifying pain—
A father's love and mortal's agony
With an immortal's patience blending : Vain
The struggle ; vain, against the coiling strain
And gripe, and deepening of the dragon's grasp,
The old man's clench ; the long envenom'd chain
Rivets the living links,—the enormous asp
Enforces pang on pang, and stifles gasp on gasp.

161. Or view the Lord of the unerring bow.
The God of life, and poesy, and light—
The sun in human limbs array'd, and brow
All radiant from his triumph in the fight;
The shaft hath just been shot—the arrow bright
With an immortal's vengeance; in his eye
And nostril beautiful disdain, and might
And majesty, flash their full lightnings by,
Developing in that one glance the Deity.

162. But in his delicate form—a dream of Love,
Shaped by some solitary nymph, whose breast
Long'd for a deathless lover from above,
And madden'd in that vision—are exprest
All that ideal beauty ever bless'd
The mind with in its most unearthly mood,
When each conception was a heavenly guest—
A ray of immortality—and stood
Statlike, around, until they gather'd to a god!

163. And if it be Prometheus stole from Heaven
The fire which we endure, it was repaid
By him to whom the energy was given
Which this poetic marble hath array'd
With an eternal glory—which, if made
By human hands, is not of human thought;
And Time himself hath hallow'd it, nor laid
One ringlet in the dust—nor hath it caught
A tinge of years, but breathes the flame with which 'twas wrought.

164. But where is he, the Pilgrim of my song,
The being who upheld it through the past?
Methinks he cometh late and tarries long.
He is no more—these breathings are his last;
His wanderings done, his visions ebbing fast,
And he himself as nothing:—if he was
Aught but a phantasy, and could be class'd
With forms which live and suffer—let that pass—
His shadow fades away into Destruction's mass,

165. Which gathers shadow, substance, life, and all
That we inherit in its mortal shroud,
And spreads the dim and universal pall
Through which all things grow phantoms; and the cloud
Between us sinks and all which ever v'd.
Till Glory's self is twilight, and displays
A melancholy halo scarce allow'd
To hover on the verge of darkness; rays
Sadder than sadddest night, for they distract the gaze,

166. And send us prying into the abyss,
To gather what we shall be when the frame
Shall be resolved to something less than this
Its wretched essence; and to dream of fame,
And wipe the dust from off the idle name
We never more shall hear,—but never more,
Oh, happier thought! can we be made the same:
It is enough in sooth that *once* we bore
These fardels of the heart—the heart whose sweat was gore.

167. Hark! forth from the abyss a voice proceeds,
A long low distant murmur of dread sound,
Such as arises when a nation bleeds
With some deep and immedicable wound;
Through storm and darkness yawns the rending ground,
The gulf is thick with phantoms, but the chief
Seems royal still, though with her head discrown'd,
And pale, but lovely, with maternal grief
She clasps a babe, to whom her breast yields no relief.

168. Scion of chiefs and monarchs, where art thou?
Fond hope of many nations, art thou dead?
Could not the grave forget thee, and lay low
Some less majestic, less beloved head?
In the sad midnight, while thy heart still bled,
Thou mother of a moment, o'er thy boy,
Death hush'd that pang for ever: with thee fled
The present happiness and promised joy
Which fill'd the imperial isles so full it seem'd to cloy.

169 Peasants bring forth in safety.—Can it be,
Oh thou that wert so happy, so adored,
Those who weep not for kings shall weep for thee,
And freedom's heart grown heavy, cease to hoard
Her many griefs for ONE! for she had pour'd
Her orisons for thee, and o'er thy head
Beheld her Iris.—Thou, too, lonely lord,
And desolate consort—vainly wert thou wed!
The husband of a year! the father of the dead!

170. Of sackcloth was thy wedding garment made;
Thy bridal's fruit is ashes: in the dust
The fair-hair'd Daughter of the Isles is laid,
The love of millions! How we did intrust
Futurity to her; and, though it must
Darken above our bones, yet fondly deem'd
Our children should obey her child, and bless'd
Her and her hoped-for seed, whose promise seem'd
Like stars to shepherd's eyes:—'twas but a meteor beam'd.

171. Woe unto us, not her; for she sleeps well:
The fickle reek of popular breath, the tongue
Of hollow counsel, the false oracle,
Which from the birth of monarchy hath rung
Its knell in princely ears, till the o'erstung
Nations have arm'd in madness, the strange fate
Which tumbles mightiest sovereigns, and hath flung
Against their blind omnipotence a weight
Within the opposing scale, which crushes soon or late,—

172. These might have been her destiny; but no,
Our hearts deny it: and so young, so fair,
Good without effort, great without a foe;
But now a bride and mother—and now *there!*
How many ties did that stern moment tear!
From thy Sire's to his humblest subject's breast
Is linked the electric chain of that despair,
Whose shock was as an earthquake's, and opprest
The land which loved thee so that none could love thee best.

173. Lo, Nemi! navell'd in the woody hills
So far, that the uprooting wind which tears
The oak from its foundation, and which spills
The ocean o'er its boundary, and bears
Its foam against the skies, reluctant spares
The oval mirror of thy glassy lake;
And calm as cherish'd hate, its surface wears
A deep cold settled aspect nought can shake,
All coil'd into itself and round, as sleeps the snake.

174. And near, Albano's scarce divided waves
Shine from a sister valley;—and afar
The Tiber winds, and the broad ocean laves
The Latian coast where sprung the Epic war,
"Arms and the man," whose re-ascending star
Rose o'er an empire:—but beneath thy right
Tully reposed from Rome;—and where yon bar
Of girdling mountains intercepts the sight
The Sabine farm was till'd, the weary bard's delight.

175. But I forget.—My Pilgrim's shrine is won,
And he and I must part,—so let it be,—
His task and mine alike are nearly done;
Yet once more let us look upon the sea;
The midland ocean breaks on him and me,
And from the Alban Mount we now behold
Our friend of youth, that Ocean, which when we
Beheld it last by Calpe's rock unfold
Those waves, we follow'd on till the dark Euxine roll'd

176. Upon the blue Symplegades: long years—
Long, though not very many—since have done
Their work on both; some suffering, and some tears
Have left us nearly where we had begun:
Yet not in vain our mortal race hath run;
We have had our reward, and it is here,—
That we can yet feel gladden'd by the sun,
And reap from earth, sea, joy almost as dear
As if there were no man to trouble what is clear.

177. Oh! that the Desert were my dwelling-place,
With one fair Spirit for my minister,
That I might all forget the human race,
And, hating no one, love but only her!
Ye elements!—in whose ennobling stir
I feel myself exalted—Can ye not
Accord me such a being? Do I err
In deeming such inhabit many a spot?
Though with them to converse can rarely be our lot.

178. There is a pleasure in the pathless woods,
There is a rapture on the lonely shore,
There is society, where none intrudes,
By the deep Sea, and music in its roar:
I love not Man the less, but Nature more,
From these our interviews, in which I steal
From all I may be, or have been before,
To mingle with the Universe, and feel
What I can ne'er express, yet cannot all conceal.

179. Roll on, thou deep and dark blue Ocean—roll!
Ten thousand fleets sweep over thee in vain;
Man marks the earth with ruin—his control
Stops with the shore; upon the watery plain
The wrecks are all thy deed, nor doth remain
A shadow of man's ravage, save his own,
When, for a moment, like a drop of rain,
He sinks into thy depths with bubbling groan,
Without a grave, unknell'd, uncoffin'd, and unknown.

180. His steps are not upon thy paths,—thy fields
Are not a spoil for him,—thou dost arise
And shake him from thee; the vile strength he wields
For earth's destruction thou dost all despise,
Spurning him from thy bosom to the skies,
And send'st him shivering in thy playful spray
And howling, to his Gods, where haply lies
His petty hope in some near port or bay,
And dashest him again to earth:—there let him lay.

The armaments which thunderstrike the walls
Of rock-built cities, bidding nations quake,
And monarchs tremble in their capitals,
The oak leviathans, whose huge ribs make
Their clay creator the vain title take
Of lord of thee, and arbiter of war—
These are thy toys, and, as the snowy flake,
They melt into thy yeast of waves, which mar
Alike the Armada's pride or spoils of Trafalgar.

Thy shores are empires, changed in all save thee—
Assyria, Greece, Rome, Carthage, what are they?
Thy waters wash'd them power while they were free,
And many a tyrant since; their shores obey
The stranger, slave, or savage; their decay
Has dried up realms to deserts:—not so thou;
Unchangeable, save to thy wild waves' play,
Time writes no wrinkle on thine azure brow—
Such as creation's dawn beheld, thou rollest now.

Thou glorious mirror, where the Almighty's form
Glasses itself in tempests; in all time,—
Calm or convulsed, in breeze, or gale, or storm,
Icing the pole, or in the torrid clime
Dark-heaving—boundless, endless, and sublime,
The image of eternity, the throne
Of the Invisible; even from out thy slime
The monsters of the deep are made; each zone
Obeys thee; thou goest forth, dread, fathomless, alone.

And I have loved thee, Ocean! and my joy
Of youthful sports was on thy breast to be
Borne like thy bubbles, onward: from a boy
I wantoned with thy breakers—they to me
Were a delight; and if the freshening sea
Made them a terror—'twas a pleasing fear,
For I was as it were a child of thee,
And trusted to thy billows far and near,
And led my hand upon thy mane—as I do here.

185. My task is done, my song hath ceased, my theme
Has died into an echo; it is fit
The spell should break of this protracted dream
The torch shall be extinguish'd which hath lit
My midnight lamp—and what is writ, is writ;
Would it were worthier! but I am not now
That which I have been—and my visions flit
Less palpably before me—and the glow
Which in my spirit dwelt is fluttering, faint, and low.

186. Farewell! a word that must be, and hath been—
A sound which makes us linger;—yet—farewell!
Ye! who have traced the pilgrim to the scene
Which is his last, if in your memories dwell
A thought which once was his, if on ye swell
A single recollection, not in vain
He wore his sandal-shoon, and scallop shell;
Farewell! with *him* alone may rest the pain,
If such there were—with *you*, the moral of his strain.

Text, pages 1 to 82,
Printed by G. C. Neogi, Nababibhakar Press,
91-2, Machua Bazar Street, Calcutta.

NOTES ON

Childe Harold's Pilgrimage

CANTO III.

Stanzas 1—7

N. B. I. These stanzas are by way of introduction. The author speaks in his own person ; even the thin disguise of speaking through the person of Childe Harold is cast off.

One thing is worth noticing ; a false note is struck in the very beginning.—The sentimental attitude which the poet affects towards his wife sits ill upon him. When Byron parted from his wife, perhaps there was no active feeling of ill-will towards her in his mind. But there never was any love between the pair ; and the persecution to which he had been subjected must have embittered him very thoroughly against her.—But love for his daughter was a genuine and abiding passion.

N. B. 2. These stanzas were actually composed in Switzerland. But the poet represents himself as still on his voyage and as starting up from a dream in the midst of his voyage.

Stanza 1. The poet dreams of his daughter and wakes up with a start in the midst of his sleep.

Ada—Augusta Ada was the first and only issue of Lord Byron's unlucky marriage ; she afterwards became by marriage. Lady Lovelace.—But though sole daughter of his house, she could hardly be called the sole daughter of his heart. Byron had a natural daughter, named Allegra, who had a very considerable share in his affection.

And then we parted—The separation took place in January 1816, only about 6 weeks after the birth of the child. *With a hope*—namely, the hope of re-union. (Lady Byron left on the pretext of visiting her family ; and it was only when there that she decided never more to return to her husband's house).

Awaking with a start—Fault has been found with the grammatical construction of the passage. As the clause stands, it seems to agree with 'waters' in the next line, so that it would be the 'waters' which awoke with a start; but of course that is absurd. The sentence amplified would mean ; "awaking with a start, *I find* the waters heaving round me."

The waters heave around me—The poet pictures himself as voyaging through the North Sea from England to the Low countries. *Lift up their voices*—begin to 'talk' as the sailors say ; in other words, gather into storm. *Whither I know not*—The student must never take Byron too literally. He knows very well whither he was going. *Lessening shore*—shore receding and fading from the sight.

The hour is gone by etc—The poet contrasts his present attitude with the mood of mind in which he left England on the previous occasion ; "Time was when the receding shores of England could move a pang of regret in my heart ; but that time has long gone by."

Stanza 2. I rejoice to be on more once the sea. Welcome to the waves even though masts may bend and sails be torn under the sway of the storm.

Once more—referring to his former journey to Spain and the countries round the Mediterranean. *Bound beneath me*—leap joyously beneath me as if glad to bear me forward. *Swift land*—May they lead swiftly, wherever the goal of my journey may be. *The strained mast*—the mast straining and bending beneath the blast. *Quiver as a reed*—tremble under the shock of the tempest.

And the rent canvas etc.—and the torn fragments of the sail be scattered upon the winds. *Wherever the surge may sweep*—wherever I may be borne forward by the waves.

Stanza 3. Once in my youth I sang of Harold, a man akin to me in his mood of mind. To day I take up the subject again.

In my youth's summer—in the hey-day of my youth ; in the midnight of my youth. (The author almost seems to imply that his youth is passed ; but even now he was only 28.) *Of one*—Childe Harold, hero of the first two cantos. *The wandering outlaw.....mind*—a man made an outcast by the gloom of his own mind ; a man who held aloof from the kindly race of man because of the savageness of his own disposition. *Seize the theme*—take up the subject ; carry it to a close.

In that tale...flower appears—**N. B** A hopeless instance of confusion of metaphor and obscurity of thought.—Byron compares his mind to the bed of a dried-up stream. The withered channel was once covered with water just as the poet's mind was instinct with living emotions. But now that the waters have ebbed, cracks and furrows are discernible on the dry sand-bed of the stream. Similarly, when the waters of living emotion have ebbed from the mind, only a dry and sterile sand-track is left behind—a track over which the last years of life jog and plod wearily along (Mr. Tozer says ; 'The furrows traced by thought from the channel in which tears run.' This may be explanation of a sort ; but it conveys no meaning.)

The furrows of long thought—the deep traces of long thought. *Dried up tears*—records of former sorrow ; memories of past grief. *In that tale.....dried up tears*—That poem to me is a store-house of many precious thoughts and much secret sorrow. *Which ebbing*—'which' has to be taken as agreeing simply with 'tears.' *Which ebbing.....behind*—The tears have now ebbed ; in other words, my former passion has subsided ; and they have left behind them only a dry and barren sand-track.

N.B—The whole passage may be thus explained ;—In this book I find recorded the thoughts and sorrows of my past years ; but those sorrows and living emotions have now subsided and and in their place there is only an aching void in the heart. And in my declining days I seek to bridge this aching void in vain.

Heavily—wearily ; with a feeling of dull despair. *Plod the last.....life*—plough heavily through the remaining years of life. *Ozer which..... sands of life*—The author is thinking of the heaviness and dulness of the declining years of human life—when the tides of fierce passion have finally subsided. *Not a flowers*—not one kind thought or generous emotion. *Where not a flower appears*—The last years of life are altogether dead and barren. No single generous thought illumines the dead waste of these years.

Stanza 4. Perhaps my hand has lost its former cunning. But the subject is familiar and not ungrateful to me ; also it may help me to forget my sorrow.

My young days of passion—the days of my youth, when it was possible for me to feel some sort of emotion whether of joy

or of grief. *Perchance my heart...string*—**Expl.** Something seems to be wanting both in my heart and in my harp. My heart has lost its former capacity for passion, my harp has lost its power of giving forth sweet melody. *Both may jar*—my sentiments may be unpleasing, my verse may be harsh and dry. *Essay*—attempt ; endeavour.

It may be.....sing—it is possible that I may fail in my attempt to sing as I sang once before. *Though a dreary strain*—though the subject may be dull and tedious to others. *Wean me—i.e*, wean me away. *So that... ..gladness*—I cling to this subject in the hope that it will help me to forget myself and to escape from the besetting sin of self-absorption. *So it fling..... wound me*—he repeats his former idea. *A not ungrateful theme*—a pleasing subject.

N. B.—The subject may have lost its interest to others : but to me it will not be unwelcome if it will help me to forget myself.

Stanza 5. The man who though young in years has grown old in experience—he best can tell why sorrow seeks solitude.

This world of war—this miserable earth. *Piercing the depths of life*—one who has penetrated into the mysteries of existence ; one who has seen all and understood all. *So that no wonder waits him*—for him there is no further surprise in life, and hence no joy. *Below*—i.e in this earth. *Cut to his heart*—i.e. cut him to the quick. *The keen knife.....endurance*—the keen edge of sorrow, all the keener because it is borne in silence. *Nor below.....endurance*—In this earth neither love, sorrow, fame, ambition nor strife can vex his soul again. *Thought*—people given to thought. *Yet rife*—in contrast with 'lone.' *Yet rife images*—teeming with the creations of fancy. *Soul's haunted cell*—the chambers of memory. *Still unimpaired*—as vivid as ever. (**Expl.** Thought seeks refuge in lone caverns; but though lone, these places are peopled thick with the creatures of imagination.)

St. 6. The charm of solitute is that it helps one to create an imaginary being ; and then, in the person of this imaginary being, to live a life more intense than before.

'Tis to create—The poet continues the thought of the preceding stanza. Thought seeks refuge in lone caves, he says, in order to indulge in the pleasure of imaginative creation. *To create*—to exercise the power of creative imagination. *A being*

more intense—a life more full of emotion, more instinct with force than the actual life enjoyed. *Endow.....fancy*—give form and shape to the creations of our fancy. *We give life.....image*—**Expl.** We give life to these images; and from the life we give, we gain life for ourselves. In other words, the work of creative imagination re-acts upon us and re-vitalizes our energies. (We imagine life for the creatures of our fancy and this imaginary life adds to our own vital force.)

What am I—I, referring to the limited physical being of the poet. *Soul of my thought*—here referring to child of his thought; the creature of his imagination. (**Expl.** I am nothing but the birth of my fancy is great; I am mortal but Harold is imperishable. *With whom*—in whose company. *As I glow*—i.e. glow with a rapture and ecstasy foreign to my usual state of existence. *As I glow.....death*—**Expl.** 'In my own proper character, I have lost all capacity for feeling joy; but as my spirit mingles with yours, my feeling seems to revive and I glow once again with rapture and ecstasy.

Mixed with thy spirit—as your spirit transfuses itself into my mind. *Feeling still.....death*—My own feelings have been crushed and destroyed; but I feel in sympathy with you.

St. 7. My lonely brooding has poisoned the sources of my being; yet I can bear without repining "the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune."

Less wildly—less incoherently. *Yet must.....wildly*—The poet almost apologises for the exulting strain of thought in the preceding stanza. *Have thought*—i.e. have brooded upon my own thoughts. *Darkly*—in a spirit of morose despair. *In its own eddy.....overwrought*—whirling constantly within the same circle and being overworked. *Whirling gulf*—a circling pool. (This has to be taken with 'brain' in l. 56. 'By whirling constantly within itself my brain has become a boiling pool of wild and frenzied ideas.')

Untaught.....tame—not having learnt to subdue the unruly passions of my nature. *Springs of life*—the roots of my being: the basic elements of my nature. *Poisoned*—tainted and corrupted in their source. ('I brooded so constantly upon my miseries, my thoughts circled so often about myself as their centre that the very elements of my being were poisoned.') *Too late*—namely to repine for my own past. *Though still.....same*—still retaining something of my former character. *The same in strength etc.*—as strong as ever to bear the sorrows which time cannot

abate. *Abate*—weaken, diminish. *Bitter fruits*—the sour fruits of repentance and sorrow. *Feed on.....fruits*—can taste the evil to tune that fate has granted to me.

Stanzas 8-16.

Leaving himself aside the author re-introduces Harold ———The hero, we may notice, presents the same lineaments of character that the author attributed to him in the first part of the poem. He is still conceived as gloomy, cynical, wrapped up in himlsef, self-weary and world-weary.

St. 8. The poet abruptly takes leave of himself. Harold re-appears—same as he was, yet not the same.

Too much of this—too much of myself. *The spell*—this brief chant concerning myself. *Closes with it silent seal*—a seal of silence is placed upon it. *He of the breast.....feel*—he who would gladly cease to feel any emotion whatever. *Wrung*—tortured. *Kill not*—do not bring about death. *But never heal*—which are never cured. *Aspect*—face. *Yet time which.....as in age*—He had grown old in years and so had been changed in mind and appearance. *Fire*—energy; enthusiasm. *Years steal.....limb*—Age robs the body of its strength and the mind of its vigour of imagination. *Life's enchanted cup*—the cup of happiness which men call life. *Sparkles*—shines. *Near the brim*—only at the edge. *Life's enchanted cup.....brim*—**Expl.** The cup of life only sparkles near the edge. In other words, it is only in youth that life is gay and vivacious.

St. 9. Harold has used up to quickly the whole force of his being.

His had been quaffed etc.—he had drunk up the cup of wine too soon. (The comparison of life to a cup of wine is at least as old as the Bible. Christ says in his passion. "Let this cup pass from me; neverthless not as I will but as thou wilt." And so in Tennyson we have "I have drunk life to the lees.") *The dregs*—lit. the sediments left at the bottom of a cup of wine. *wormwood*—i.e. bitter as gall and poison. **N. B.** Divested of metaphor, the passage means:—he had drunk up life's cup of happiness too soon and now he was reaping the after-crops of repentance.—The reference here is to the years of idle dissipation which Byron had spent in England before starting on his first tour.

From a purer fount—He filled his cup of life again from a purer source; in other words, he drew inspiration from a new source for a fresh lease of life. *Purer fount*—The reference to

his travels in the concecrated land of Greece. *Deemed its spring perpetual*—deemed that this fresh stream of happiness would last for ever. *Still round him etc.*—**Expl.** He thought that a new period in his life would open after the travels in Greece; but all his expectations were in vain. What was wrong with Byron was in his inner nature and not in outward circumstances

Galled—fretted; ate into his body. *Still round him..... clanked not*—He was held fast by a chain which, though unseen, irked him none the less; and which was none the less heavy though it made no sound. (This chain would be the chain of his personality, the chain created by his antecedents and by his morbid nature.) *Entering with every.....scene*—He might change scenes, he might pass from land to land; but the pang which accompanied him would continue to pursue him for ever. Compare Horace—'The sky changes and not the mind though we might cross the seas.'

St. 10. He had once again begun to mix with society, fondly hoping that he was now proof against temptation, hoping also that if joy was no longer possible to him, sorrow was equally impossible.

Secure coldness—confident in what he supposed to be coldness of his nature. *Coldness*—insensibility to temptation *Famed safety*—imaginary security. Imaginary, because, he had overrated the coldness of his disposition (He thought he was proof against temptation, specially against female charm; but it proved to be otherwise.)

So firmly fixed—strong and unshakeable. *Invulnerable mind*—a mind which could not be affected. *No sorrow lurked behind*—it would be impossible for him to suffer disappointment again. *As one unheeded*- must lose himself in the crowd. *Searching speculation*—seeking solitude in the midst of crowds. *Fit speculation*—fit place for speculation.

N. B. Byron here enumerates his reasons for mixing in human society again :—(1) he thought he was proof against temptation : (2) he thought he would feel sorrow no more; (3) and he thought he would be lost in the crowd.

St. 11. But once he had plunged into the vortex of society, the old forces reasserted their power; and he had to swim with the current.

Who can view..... grow old—in other words, who can resist temptation when temptation is so strong? 'If you see the ripened rose, you want to pluck it; if you behold the bloom of beauty upon woman's cheek, you want to enjoy it.

Curiously—in a spirit of contemplation merely ; with a lofty detachment of spirit and with no view to enjoy it. *Sheen*—shining brilliant. *Can never.....grow old*—can never lose all its capacity for emotion. *Who can contemplate.....climb*—who can behold the star of fame shining in the distance and not seek to attain it. *Cloud*—This would signify the struggles and uncertainties through which man has to pass before he can seek to attain fame.

Over her steep—at the summit of some lofty precipice. *Nor climb*—i. e. with a view to reach the star. *The voetex*—the gay whirlpool of society. *The gidly circle*—the fashionable throng. *Rolled on.....circle*—followed the vapid round of dissipated pleasure.

Chasing Time—dancing giddily in mad pursuit of time, as it were. (Of course, time can never be overtaken ; his metaphor indicates the futile character of these pleasures.) *Fond prime*—foolish season of youth. *Yet with.....preme*—though he mixes now in society with a better object.

St. 12. Yet Harold soon recognised tnat social life was not for him he could not so school himself as to submit his thoughts to others.

To herd with man—to mix indiscriminately with the vulgar herd. *To submit his thought to others*—to make his thoughts run into a common mould ; to shape his thoughts after the approved pattern ; in other words, to think as others do. *Quelled*—subdued, overawed. *His own thoughts*—the wild and impetuous character of his thoughts.

Though his soul.....thoughts—The wildness and tumult of his thoughts had overawed even himself in his youth. *Against whom.....rebelled*—whom he loathed at heart. *Though in desolation*—though solitary.

Which could find.....itself—This has to be taken in connection with "mind" in l. 10. (He was self sufficient ; his mind was a world to himself ; he could live without the help and sympathy of others,)

St. 13. The sky, the ocean, the mountains—these were friends and home enough for him.

Where rose the mountains etc—In other word he was at home wherever nature displayed herself in all the prodigality of her beauty, bounty and greatness. *Were unto him companionship*—These served him as fit companions. *They spake.....language*—

they called to his heart ; they spoke a language which he could understand. (The word "mutual" here, if we are to believe Macaulay is absolutely idefensible." *Tome*—properly, a heavy volume ; here simply a book. *Glassed.....lake*—mirrored on the broad surface of the lake. *He would ofl forsake*—in other words, he would often leave the study of books for the contemplation of natural beauty.

St. 14. Gazing upon stars he forget the earth-born jars of the world. Happy if he could always have kept himself at that high level ;—but the flesh is frail.

The Chaldean etc—natives of ancient Syria, famous for their studies in Astrology. *Till he had peopled.....own beams*—Gazing upon the stars he peopled them with creatures bright as themselves. *Earth-born jars*—the mean empty struggles of this earth. *Human frailties*—errors incidental to human nature. *To that flight*—at that high level. *Could he have kept.....flight*—if he could have always maintened himself at this high level of creative fancy and imagination.

This clay—this weak and fallible body of ours. *Will sink*—will overwhelm ; will degrade. *Its spark immortal*—i. e. the immortal soul which inhabits the body. *This clay.....immortal*—This gross, earthly body of ours will overwhelm the soul with its baser element. *It*—i. e. the soul. *The hetght to which it mounts*—the height which it can reach : the illumination which easily fills it. (The body envies the soul, and hence seeks to debase and corrupt it.) *To break the link*—The body seeks to sever utterly the connection which subsists between us and Heaven.

N. B. The idea is this :—We are separated from God ; but still a link seems to subsist between us and Heaven and Heaven seems to be calling to us for ever. But the body, envious of the pure light of the soul, seeks to sever this connection utterly and for ever. *Woos us to its brink*—invites us ; calls us to its own side.

Stanza 15. In the dwellings of man he pined and drooped like a falcon in its cage.

In man's dwellings—pent up within the cities of men. *Worn*—exhausted with inner conflict. *Stern*—because unhappy. *A wild-born falcon*—a falcon born free in the wilderness. *Boundless air*—the limitless horizon. *Drooped*—faded ; grew listless. *Drooped... ..home*—Just as the falcon bred in the wilderness feels

at home only in the free horizon and droops if confined within a cage, so he drooped and pined in the cities of man. *His fit*—his fit of restlessness. *The barred up bird*—the caged, confined bird. *Wiry dome*—his cage of wires. *Will beat his breast etc.*—in its eager impatience to escape. *Heat*—passionate strength. *His impeded soul*—his curbed, confined spirit.

Would though eat—would make him prey inwardly upon his own spirit. (As the caged bird beats vainly against the wires of its cage in mad attempts to escape, so, when the fit of restlessness was upon him, he would fret and pine inwardly in mad attempts to break through the fetters of society.)

Stanza 16 So in despair he set forth on his travels again.

Self-exiled—not driven by society but exiled by his own gloomy and restless disposition. *With nought.....left*—hoping for no happiness in the course of his travels. *That he lived in vain*—that nothing was to be expected from his life. *On this side of the tomb*—i. e. in the stage of existence. *He made..... assume*—he had grown so hopeless and desperate that despair itself gave a sort of happiness to him. *Though it were wild*—though this sort of joy had something ghastly about it because it joy born of despair.

Forbore to cheek—did not care to suppress. *Did yet inspire check*—His smile was ghastly but he did not care to suppress it; for smiles of any sort were rare with him now. *As on the plundered wreck*—The ghastly gaiety of Harold—his smile of despair—is compared to the wild revelry in which sailors engage when their ship is about to be totally wrecked. *Would madly mock their doom*—hurry forward to escape death.

Draughts intemperate—copius draughts of wine. (As sailors feeling death to be sure, hasten forward to meet it in a mad spirit of dare-devilry, so Harold, desperate at heart, went forth into the world with a smile on his lips.)

Stanzas 17-28.

Harold's sea-voyage is over; he has entered Belgium; and in verses of unsurpassed magnificence, the poet introduces us at once to Waterloo *First*—we have some brief but eloquent moralising on the world-shaking conflict.

Stanza 17. Stop! for though unmarked with memorials, this is the field of Waterloo, waving now with a wealth of corn.

On an Empire's dust—where the French empire was hurled

to nothingness. *An Earthquake's spoil*—Waterloo with its world-shaking consequences is compared to an earthquake; and the carnage of this battle is compared to the spoil of an Earthquake.

Sepulchred below—buried beneath your footstep. *It the spot bust*—Has no colossal statue been erected to mark the momentous character of the spot? (Byron visited the field of Waterloo within less than a year of the battle; and as yet no memorial had been erected on the site. But a mound has now been raised there crowned with the figure of the Belgian Lion.)

Trophied—adorned with trophies.

The moral's truth..... so—The moral of things can be best understood as things stand; the absence of any memorial brings the moral nearer home to us.—Mr. Tozer says that the moral is the insignificance of the battle of Waterloo, viewed in relation to the history of the world. But that could hardly have been the meaning of the poet, The moral rather is the insignificance of *all thins human*, not of the battle of Waterloo especially, but all mundane things. To-day they exist but to-morrow the very memory of them fades away.

That red rain—the blood spilt in the battle.

Hath made the harvest grow—hath fertilized the ground, hath made the corn grow abundantly. (Macaulay noticed the same fact with reference to the battle of Neerwinden which also was fought in Flanders.)

Is this—namely, the abundance of this harvest. *First and last of fields*—the greatest conflict in the history of the world *King-making victory*—No special reference is intended though no doubt the Bourbons were restored to the throne of France as the first consequence of the battle.

Stanza 18 Some natural moralising upon the transitory nature of human glory.

This place of skulls—so called because of the fearful carnage of the battle. (Byron is thinking of the Scriptural Golgotha, the place of skulls).

The grave of France—because the glory of France died there *The power which gave*—not God but Fate. *Annuls its gifts*—cancels, calls back its gifts. *Transferring fame etc.*—As its calls back its gifts, so it cancels fame also. (If the other gifts like power and sovereignty are fleeting, so also is fame—that too perishes as quickly as the rest.)

Pride of place—a term of falconry ; the highest pitch in the flight of a falcon. *Eagle*—standing for the power of France (The Eagle had been adopted by Napoleon as the standard of the French legions.) *In pride of place.....eagle flew*—The power of Napoleon last broke forth in dazzling splendour here. *Then tore the bloody talon etc.*—The simile of the eagle is kept up. 'The falcon soaring in its pride of place comes down to the ground if wounded : but even there, it tears up the ground with bloody talons in impotent fury.So Napoleon, though crippled and enfeebled, yet put forth a last despairing effort here.

The rent plain—i. e. the plain which was rent by its tearing. ('Rent'is proleptic.) *Banded nations*—referring to the alliance which had been made against France. *Ambition's life*—the life of Napoleon. *He wears.....broken chain*—He had himself to wear the fetters which he sought to impose upon the world. (He had sought to enslave and enchain the world ; but the world had broken through its fetters. And it was he upon whom the chains weighed heavily now.)

St. 19. (The Poet asks a few searching questions.) France has no doubt been humiliated. But is the earth more free ? Have monarchs learnt the limits of true sovereignty ? Answer these questions first ere going into raptures over the victory of Waterloo.

Fit retribution—Just punishment. The poet muses if the battle is indeed a fit retribution as people describe it. *Bit*—an iron curb put into the mouth of horses *May champ the bit*—may be impatient of its fetters. *Foam in fetters*—may chafeunder the weight of new sovereignity. *Gaul may champ... ...fetters*—France may be impatient of her new sovereignty ; but it is not for her that I am specially grieved.

Is earth more free—that is the crucial question. It is answer to this which will determine for us the value of this victory, (Whether France has been humiliated or not is not the question ; the question is—has the victory secured the liberties of Europe ?)

All Kings—not Napoleon alone. *One*—namely, Napoleon.

True sovereignty—the due limits within which kings should exercise their rights. *The patched-up idol.....days*—the foolish idol of later times. *Shall reviving thraldom etc.*—Will people begin once again to worship the fetish of monarchy.

The Lion—i. e. Napoleon. *The Wolf*—other kings far inferior to him. *Shall we.....homage*—We who struck down

Napoleon from his throne, shall we bend our knees before other, smaller kings? *No*--This is not in answer to the questions given before; the author simply rssumes his train of thought *Prove before ye praise*—**Expl.** Ascertain what the victory of Waterloo is worth, whether it has succ-eded in making people free or not, ere going into raptures over the matter.

St. 20 But if the earth is to be as much in bondage as ever then it is useless triumphing over Napoleon

If not—if these ends have not been achieved; if kings have not learnt true sovereignty and if earth is not more free. *Fair cheeks*—the cheeks of women, pining in the absence of their children and husbands. *Europe's flowers*—the best and bravest children of Europe. (Byron is obviously thinking of the beautiful Scottish balland—"the flower of the forest are a' wede away.")

Long rooted up—rooted up during the long duration of the Napoleonic wars. *The trampler of her vineyards*—i. e. the invading hosts of different countries.

In vain fair cheeks.....vineyards--The bravest sons of Europe have long been fighting against the power of Napoleon; and their relatives at home have been weeping for them. But all this death and suffering will have been in vain if these ends are not achieved

Accord—friendship, alliance. *Roused up millions*—millions who have at last been roused against the tyranny of Napolean. *Broken by the accord.....millions*—The bondage of fear under which the nations had lain so long has at last been broken by the accord and unity of people. But even this rising will have been in vain if earth is not made more free. *Glory*—military glory.

When the myrtle wreathes a sword etc.—in other words, when the sword is drawn in defence of freedom. **N.B.** When Pisistratus Tyrant of Athens, was succeeded by his sons, Hippias and Hipparchus, a conspiracy was formed against them under the leadership of Harmodius and Aristogeiton. At the festival of Panathenea, they carried daggers concealed in myrtle wreathes and killed Hipparchus with one of these, and since then, the wreathed myrtle has been the symbol of a blow struck in defence of liberty.

That most endears.....glory—Military glory is then most precious when it is achieved in defence of freedom.

St. 21. The poet begins dramatically enough with the description of a Ball, and this in order to heighten by contrast the story of the conflict

which follows The ball on the eve of Waterloo, —a deep note like a rising knell breaks through the voluptuous swell of the ball music

A sound of revelry—the ball which was given at Brussels on the night of the 15th of June 1815 It is commonly spoken of as the ball on the eve of Waterloo But, Waterloo was fought three days after, on the 18th of June, so that as a matter of fact it was the ball on the eve of Quatre Bras

Her beauty and her chivalry—'fair women and brave men' *Voluptuous swell*—sweet, rapturous and sensuous melody *Soft eyes*—i e, eyes tender with love *Look'd love*—looked with an expression of love *Which spake again*—which responded to their looks. *Looked love .. again*—they gazed at each other with an expression of mutual love.

A deep sound—i e., the distant sound of cannon

St. 22 It is it is not it is the cannon of Waterloo

It was but the wind—people did not at once recognise in it the thunder of distant cannon. *Let joy be unconfined*—let there be no restraint on pleasure *When youth and pleasure meet*—when young people meet intent on the pursuit of pleasure. *To chase the glowing . . feet*—to spend the happy hours in swift dancing *The glowing hours*—hours rosy with happiness and love *Breaks in*—interrupts the sound of music *Deadlier*—with more fatal and terrible effect *Opening roar*—the roar of the opening cannonade.

St. 23 The chief of Brunswick quenches the soul first with death's prophetic ear People mocked at his fear, but knew wiser than they

Windowed niche—a bay window, a window with a recess in it *Brunswick's fated chieftain*—so called because the Prince of Brunswick was to die next day in the battle of Quatre Bras. *Death's prophetic ear*—ear sharpened by the fact of approaching death *When they smiled*—when people mocked at him for his fear *It*—i e, death

His heart.....too well—he recognised this portent more truly than they *Knew that peal*—recognised the significance of that roar *Stretched his father etc*—which had been the cause of his father's premature death (The father of the present chieftain had been mortally wounded in the battle of *Auerstadt* which immediately followed the more important battle of *Jena*.)

Roused the vengeance etc.—inspired him with feelings of vengeance. *Blood guilt*—which could be satisfied only by the spilling of the foeman's blood. (In other words, he not only recognised the omious significance of the cannonade, it inspired him with feelings of fury and vengeance.)

St 24. Sudden partings—gathering tears—hurryings to and fro—all the bustle and tumult incidental to opening battle.

Hurrying to and fro—i. e., on the part of military officers who had been suddenly informed of the commencement of the he battle. *Gathering tears*—in the eyes of women compelled to part with their loved ones. *Cheeks all pale*—again referring to the cheeks of women compelled to part from their sons and husbands and fathers. *All pale*—contrast with 'blushed in the next line. (Cheeks which had been crimson with modesty and pleasure only a little while before were now pale with fear and quick apprehension.) *Blushed at the praise.....loveliness*—Their partners in the ball had been pouring into their ears whispered admiration of their beauty: and their cheeks blushed crimson as they heard this praise. *Such as.....young hearts*—such partings as crush out the lives of young people. *Choking sighs*—sobs of lamentdation. *Might be repeated*—because these young people might die and never meet again. *Those mutual eyes*—eyes that looked love at one another. *Since upon night..... could rise*—Who could have conceived that such a beautiful night should have such a dreadful close?—and such being the case, who could foretell as to whether these people would meet again?

St. 25. Same thought continued. Mounting in hot haste on the part of officers eager to join in the battle.

Clattering car—i. e., gun-carriages rattling over the streets. *Forming.....war*—ranging themselves in order of battle. *The deep thunder &c.*—the sonorous boom of the distant cannon. *Alarming drum*—the drum sounding the alarum, calling soldiers to arms. *Eye the morning star*—ere it was quite dawn. *White lips*—lips pale and bloodless with fear.

St. 26. Among the martial sounds rose shrill and keen the pibroch of the Camerons.

Cameron's gathering—i. e., the war-song of the Cameron clan. 'The pibroch which called the Camerons to gather under the chieftain's standard.' *Lochiel*—the chief of the Cameron clan.

Albion's hills—hills of Scotland. (The war-pipe of Lochiel has been heard ere now in Scotland; it has been heard in England also; and now in this dread hour of midnight it is sounding on the distant plain of Flanders.) *Her saxon foes*—i. e, the English and the low-landers who were regarded as hereditary foes of the High landers. (The Camerons had specially distinguished themselves in the Jacobite risings of 1715—1744. In the latter rebellion specially Donald, 'the gentle Lochiel' as he was called had played a most conspicuous part.

In the noon of night—at midnight. *The pibroch*—the war-pipe of the clan. *Thrills*—affects the heart strangely. *But with the breath which fills*—an awkward and lumbering sentence. The meaning may be thus expressed: As the breath fills the bagpipe, so is the mind of the High landers filled with a fierce daring and courage, a daring born out of a thousand years of struggle and conflict; and in their ears there rings the praise of their departed chieftains.

Fierce native daring—a courage which is natural to the Highlanders. *The stirring memory.....years*—memory associated with thousand scenes of battle and carnage. *Evan's Donald's*—Evan Cameron and his son Donald had both distinguished themselves greatly in the war with the English.

St. 27. The woods of Ardennes weep (shed their dews) over the unreturning brave.

Ardennes—The forest or rather the forest-district of the Ardennes is on the frontier of France and Belgium; and the wood which intervenes between Brussels and Waterloo and through which the soldiers had to pass this morning was the forest of Soignies and not the wood of Ardennes. But the poet evidently regards it as a part and offshoot of the larger forest. *Dewy with nature's tear drops*—an instance of the 'pathetic fallacy' as Ruskin calls it. 'The trees shed their dews upon the the heads of the soldiers as they pass': this is regarded as nature shedding tears over them.

The unreturning brave—the brave who are destined never more to return. *Which was beneath them.....verdure*—The grass which is beneath them now will be above them when it grows next season; in other words, they will be dead and buried by that time.

This fiery mass.....valour—this courageous band of warriors, *Rolling on the foe*—moving in an irresistible body towards the foe *Shall moulder*—shall decay with the decaying earth. *Burning with high hope*—glowing with enthusiasm.

St. 28. Contrast between yesterday (in its different hours) and today and the possible future.

Lusty life—strong, vigorous life. *Last eve*—namely, at the ball. *In beauty's circle*—in the company of fair women. *The signal sound of strife*—the roar of distant cannonade. *Marshalling in arms*—forming in battle array. *Battle's..... array*—the stern grandeur of battle. (The student will notice the carefully elaborated climax in this passage). *Thunder clouds*—the dense smoke of cannonade. *Which when rent*—when the smoke will be dissipated. *The earth is covered..... clay*—The field will be found to be covered with another kind of clay, viz. the corpses of dead warriors. (The field is blotted out by a dense mass of smoke now; but this smoke-canopy will presently be lifted and then the earth will be found to be covered with another kind of soil.) *Which her own clay shall cover*—but this other clay (the corpses of dead warriors) also will not last long. The earth will impose upon it another layer of her own soil. *Red burial*—so called because of the bloodshed. *In one red burial blent*—indiscriminately mingled in one mass of slaughter; buried indiscriminately in the same tomb.

Stanzas 29—35.

From Waterloo the Poet naturally passes on to speak of the victims of Waterloo. specially, of his kinsman Howard.

Stanza 29. Loftier bards than I have sung of the victims of Waterloo but for diverse reasons I shall choose one of them for myself.

Is hymned—will be sung. (But this prophecy has not been fulfilled: Waterloo has not been sung by great bards. *Proud throng*—proud because of the manner of their death. *Blend me with his line*—make me out a member of the same family. (Mark the assumption of superb contempt in the line,)

Partly that.....some wrong—partly by way of reparation for the insult I had offered to his father. (This, one may say,

is the way in which the Olympians do courtesy to one another. There is a lofty condescension in Byron's manner of referring to his old quarrel with the Earl of Carlisle, which is certainly very striking.)

His Sire—i.e. the Earl of Carlisle who had been Byron's guardian during his infancy but whom he had satirised in the *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers* on account of some fancied coldness in his manner.

Bright names.....song—it will heighten the value of my poetry if it is associated with such names as his. *The thinn'd files*—the decimated ranks of the army. *Death bolts*—cannon shot. *When showered.....deadliest*—when the cannon discharged their missiles most fearfully among our ranks.

War's tempest—the thunder-cloud of war as Byron calls it in Stanza 28. *Lowered*—frowned. *Where the thickest lowered*—where the battle was at its fiercest.

Stanza 30. When I stood on the field of death and watched all the wealth and promise of spring, I could not help but think of those whom the spring could never revive.

There have been tears.....hearts for thee—People have wept for you and have broken their hearts over your fate. *Were as nothing*—would be valueless in comparison with what you have received. *Which living waves &c.*—The life of the tree, of nature, is contrasted with the death of man. (The trees still live but thou hast ceased to live.)

Fertile promise—the promise of fertility unfolded by spring.

Her work of gladness to contrive—viz. to give joy, which is the special function of Spring. *Her reckless birds*—birds heedless of the slaughter of men. *All she brought*—all the wealth of fruit, corn and song which spring had brought with it.

To those she...could not bring—**Expl.** When I watched the Spring, with all its wealth of corn and fruits and all the birds following in her train, I could not but contrast this abounding vitality of nature with your death.

Stanza 31. The thousands who fell in the battle :—thought of glory cannot quench, it only embitters the sorrow of their kith and kin.

Each—i.e. each individual. *One as all*—all alike. *A ghastly gap*—a fearful void. *Each and one.....kind and kindred*—The

individual worth of those who fell in the battle must have been very different; but the death of each made a melancholy void in his home circle. The death of each sent the household into mourning. *Whom to teach..... for their sake*—It would be mercy to them if they could be taught forgetfulness. *Whom they thirst for*—whom they are eager to meet. *The Archangel's trump*—i. e. the trump of doom; the note which will summon the dead to take their judgment. *Cannot slake*—i. e. cannot quench. *Though the sound of fame..... vain longing*—The thought that the dear departed is famous may soothe them for a time, but it cannot quench the longing of their heart. *Bitterer claim*—i.e. on their affection.

Stanza 32. Outwardly they put on a brave show, but inly they bleed.

Smiling mourn—in other words, smiles and tears alternate in their case. *The tree.....it fall*—In other words, though the heart may be wrung with anguish, that does not mean immediate death for the sufferer. Trees though rotten at the core may linger on for a long while; and so, the heart that is broken will yet survive through years of misery. *The hull*—the trunk, the body of the ship so to say. *Moulders on*—continues to decay. *The roof tree.....hall*—the roof may give in, yet the walls will continue standing. **N. B.**—The piling up of these similes—viz., of the tree withering long before it falls, the ship driving on with mast broken and sails torn, the walls standing though the roof has fallen—is meant to indicate the same thing, *viz.* that the heart though broken does not at once bring the solace of death.

Battlements—projecting parapets. *Wind worn*—battered by the wind. *Enthral*—imprison; enslave. *The bars survive.....enthral*—The captive dies; but the prison-cage survives him. So, though the heart within may be dead, the body survives. *Drag through*—pass wearily by. *Keep out*—i.e. shut out the light. *Thus the heart will break.*—Here is the moral of the w' 'e—a moral which would be amplified in the next stanza.

Stanza 33. The broken heart is compared to a broken mirror. The mirror when dashed to a thousand pieces multiplies the image in its fragments and thus seems to gain an added vitality, as it were. Similarly, the heart that is broken multiplies in memory the cherished image of the beloved dead: and in that respect its life of emotion seems to be greater than before.

Which the glass.....multiplies—The mirror is multiplied in its broken fragments.—So long as the mirror was whole, it returns a thousand images, each fragment of glass returning one. *Still the more.....breaks*—and the more it is broken the more images it returns. (Thus the very breaking of the mirror seems to have added to its life and capacity as it were.) *Thus the heart will do*—The broken heart will behave like the broken mirror.

Stanza 34. Same idea is continued. The broken heart lingers on ; its very despair gives it a new lease of life as it were—If excess of grief could kill us, we would die and all would be well ; and so to prolong our misery our very despair quickens our life.

There is a very life.....despair—**Expl.** There is a principle of growth inherent in despair :—despair feeds and flourishes upon itself.

Vitality of poison—morbid, unhealthy or unwholesome life *Quick*—i.e., quickening.

These deadly branches—namely, sorrow and despair. (There is a principle of growth which keeps alive our sorrow and despair. And why ? Because, unless it were so, if sorrow brought death with its excess, then it would be no punishment for us.)

It were as nothing—it would be no punishment.

Life will suit.....fruit—Life seeks to feed and sustain itself upon sorrow.—And what is the result ? Sorrow gives distaste to life, just as Dead Sea fruits turn to ashes in the mouth. (The fruits of sorrow are compared to Dead Sea apples, but the similarity is in one respect only. Dead Sea fruits turn bitter in the mouth, and so sorrow gives disrelish to life.)

Apples on the Dead Sea shore—a species of gall-nut which is liable to be mistaken for a ripe plum but which turns to dust in the mouth. (There is a reference to 'grapes of gall' in *Deuteronomy*. XXXII., 32.) *Compute*—reckon ; estimate.

Did men compute etc—Men measure life by years. But if they counted the value of existence by the gladness or sorrow it brings, then they would not care to live the allotted span of years.

Count over.....life—If they set off their hours of concentrated misery with the years of life which they live in the world would they care to live long? *Such hours—i.e.*, hours of bitter grief.

St. 35. The Psalmist gives three score years and ten as the allotted span of human life. They are enough and, to judge by Waterloo, more than enough.

Numbered out—gave 70 years as the allotted span of life. *Thy tale*—to be taken with 'fatal Waterloo' in l. 310. The witness borne by you; the moral of your story. *That fleeting span*—that short-lived period. *Grudge him*—him, *i.e.*, Napoleon. *Thou, who didst.....span*—Napoleon was perhaps 44, certainly not more than 46, at the time of Waterloo. *Millions of tongues*—From what follows, this would seem to refer to men who took part in the battle. *United nations*—The Grand Alliance, to which most of the European nations were a party and which had been started to oppose Napoleon in 1814, was revived as soon as the Emperor escaped from Elba; but the nations, who actually took part in the battle of Waterloo, were the English, the Belgians and the Germans—the English forming less than one third of the allied army.

This is much—The fact that even so much could be remembered of Waterloo is much. *All which.....pass away*—a weak and commonplace line 'Everything else about Waterloo will pass away. Only this will remain.'

Stanzas 36-45.

The picture of Napoleon which the poet gives us here is modelled partly upon his own character or what he supposed to be his own character.—"You could not control your own pettiest passions; you did not know your own heart; you despised men—wisely—but expressed your contempt too *freely* and that was unwise": these are the chief elements which Byron notices in the character of Napoleon; and these were the elements which he affected also to find in his own character.

St. 36. You were alike the greatest and least of men—extreme in all things. If you had steered a middle course, either you would never have been a king or you would never have lost your throne.

Antithetically mixt—a compound of opposite and contrasted attributes; a character built of antitheses.

Like firmness—equal tenacity. *One moment.....fixt*—you exhibited the same tenacity in the pursuit of all objects, the greatest as well as the most trifling

Hadst thou.....betwixt—if you had persevered in the golden mean. *Betwixt—i.e.*, between extreme courses. *Thy throne... thine*—you would still have remained king. *Thy throne ... never been*—or you would never have been a king. *Daring*—courage. *Daring.....fall*—Excess of courage made you rise, excess of courage brought about your fall.

Imperial mien—here the state and power of an emperor. *Thou seek'st.....mien*—you seek to be emperor again. *The thunderer of the scene*—the mightiest figure in the world.

St. 37 Your name fills the world even now when you are nothing.

Captive of the earth—the slave and thrall of the earth; one held in the bondages of the Earth.

Conquerer.....art thou—You conquered the earth, but the earth had its revenge upon you; you were conquered by its pleasures and temptations.

Wild name—terror-striking name. *Bruited*—circulated; rumoured. *Jest of fame*—the play-thing of fortune., (One who has been lifted high by fortune and hurled down equally low.) *Who*—referring to fame. *Woo'd thee once*—courted thee as thy slave.

Became the flatterer.....fierceness—flattered and fanned you to moods of fury. *Thou wert thyself*—till you became in your own estimation like unto to a god.

Who woo'd thee once.....thyself—Fame followed and courted you once like a vassal so that in your own estimation you seemed to be like unto to a God.

Nor less the same—and you appeared as a god also to the kings and peoples of Europe. *Inert*—dull and lifeless. *Who deemed.....assert*—took you at your own estimation; accepted you at your own valuation.

St. 38. You could crush empires but could not subdue your pettiest passion.

More or less than man—more than man when fighting with banded nations: *less* than man when running away from the

battle field. *High or low*—more in high and less in low. (*In high*—at the height of your fortune; *in low*—in the depth of distress.) *Making monarch's necks.....footstool*—trampling upon the neck of kings. *Taught to yield*—yielding abjectly like a coward. *Thy pettiest passion*—the least little whim of yours. *Deeply*—profoundly. *However deeply..... skilled*—however accurate you might be in your knowledge of human nature. *Nor curb.....war*—you could not check your fierce lust for war. *Tempted fate*—fortune when it is tried too often. *The loftiest star*—the most fortunate of men. (Fortune will turn even against her chief favourite if tempted too often.)

St. 39. But you ended well:—you bore the buffets of fortune with a smile.

Brooked—endured. *The turning tide*—*i.e.*, the turning tide of fortune. *Innate Philosophy*—here meaning, proud equanimity of disposition; a temper of mind which is rarely disturbed. *That untaught innate Philosophy*—that iron stoicism of nature which is not learnt from books, but is ingrained in human nature. *Coldness*—indifference to popular opinion. *Gall and wormwood*—a source of bitter vexation. *Is gall and worm-wood.....enemy*—because it deprives the enemy of his expected triumph. (If you bear misfortune with equanimity, that is a bitter mortification to the enemy.) *The whole host of hatred*—the banded ranks of your enemies.

Mock thee shrinking—mock thee for that exhibition of cowardice which they expected in you *Sedate*—calm; serene. *All enduring*—capable of bearing misfortune heroically. *Spoiled*—spoiled by much success. *Unbowed*—erect; his soul not crushed. *Ills upon him piled*—misfortune raining upon him.

St. 40. In your days of prosperity you despised men and their thoughts—and that was well; but you showed your contempt too openly—and that was not so well.

Sager than.....fortunes—wiser in adversity than in prosperity. *In them*—in your days of success. *Steeled thee*—hardened, emboldened your nature.

That just habitual scorn—that well-deserved scorn for mankind which was natural to you. (Mark the characteristic

epithet 'just'. Men are fools, the poet implies, and scorn is the only possible attitude towards them.)

Ambition.....scorn—Ambition made you so audacious that you showed too openly the scorn which you only too justly felt for men. *Not so...i.e.*, not wise. *Wear it.....brow*—to express your opinion in speech and gestures. *Spurn*—kick; treat with contempt. *The instruments etc.*—the human beings that you idolised as your tools.

Till they were.....overthrow—but who, because of your contempt, turned your enemies and contributed to your defeat. (Napoleon experienced plenty of treachery from those he had benefited; but the reference would particularly apply to the case of Barnadotte—General of the French Republic, then a subordinate of Napoleon and afterwards, by Napoleon's help, king of Sweden. *This but a worthless world*—This world is not worth winning or losing. There is no pleasure in winning it and no sorrow in losing it.

Stanza 41. If you had been privileged to stand alone you could have afforded to be a cynic; but there is no room in the world for sceptered cynics.

Headlong rock—a precipitous rock; a rock which rises sheer and abruptly from the ground.

If like a tower—**Expl.**:—The tower, standing upon a precipitous rock, falls alone; it involves nothing else in its ruin. So, if you were solitary like this tower, you also could have afforded to be a cynic. But your fall involved the ruin of many; and consideration for these should have prevented you from toying with the dangerous game of cynicism.

If, like a tower.....alone—if you had occupied a position of such isolation that your fall would have involved the ruin of none else. *But men's thought.....throne*—but you had to base your kingdom upon the good will of men. Popularity was the only support of your power. *The step.....throne*—One is reminded of St. Augustine's saying "we rise upon the stepping stones of our dead selves." *Their admiration etc.*—the applause of the multitude was your chief strength.

The part of Philip's son—The contrast is between Philip's son (Alexander) and Diogenes. Your part was the part of Alexander and so you could not afford to be Diogenes also.

In other words, an emperor has no business to be a cynic ; the poet is thinking of the famous meeting between Alexander and Diogenes when the philosopher asked the king 'to stand out of the Sun.')

Thy purple—symbol of empire from Roman days.

Unless.....thrown—unless you had cast aside his sovereignty. *Not then.....Diogenes*—Therefore it could not be your part to sneer at mankind like Diogenes.

Far too wide a den—too roomy a place. *Sceptered cynics*—kings who affect to despise mankind. *The sceptered cynics..... den*—This earth affords no congenial room for kings who affect to be cynics.

St. 42 Napoleon's conduct explained. He was a prey to that restlessness which is the inevitable accompaniment and likewise the bane of "quick bosoms."

Quiet—dull inaction. *Quick bosom*—men of fiery activity.

There hath been thy bane—has been the cause of your ruin (*bane*—poison, ruin.) *A fire and motion of the soul*—an ardour and impetuosity of the mind. *Will not dwell*—will not rest *Narrow being*—narrow circle of routine-duties. *Fitting medium of desire*—the safe object of ordinary human desire. (The word *medium* is loosely used ; Byron means 'object of desire.') *There is a fire...desire*—There are people of fiery intelligence who will not dwell contented with the humdrum routine of daily life. Their minds aspire beyond the ordinary objects of human desire.

Once kindled—once the fire of ambition is kindled within. *Quenchless*—inextinguishable. *Nor can tire.....rest*—The only thing hateful to them is inaction. *At the core*—in the heart of their being. *Fatal to him...bears*—it means death for the man who bears it. *Who ever bore*—who ever suffered under such poison.

St. 43. Kings and conquerors, founders of sects and systems, bards, statesmen and sophists—all alike are the victims of this contagion of restlessness.

This—namely, this perennial restlessness of mind. *Mad men*—here in the sense of men of genius. *Who have made... contagion*—who have infected other people with their contagion of their madness. *Sects and systems*—religious sects and philosophic systems. *Sophists*—loosely in the sense of philo-

sophers. *Unquiet things*—persons with fever at the core of their heart. *Which stir.....springs*—can appeal too fervently to the inner springs of men's nature.

Fool—deceive. Cf "I have fooled him to the top of his bent." *Are themselves...fool*—They affect to be leaders, but they must be the followers of those who follow them. *Envied*—i. e. by men in general. *Stings*—pangs. *One breast*—the individual thoughts of any one of them. *Would unteach mankind.....rule* ..would make men lose all desire for rule or glory. *The lust to shine*—to excel over others.

One breast.....rule ..**Expl.** If the secret feelings of any one of them could be laid bare before us, if we could have a glimpse of the inner working of his nature, it would make us lose all desire for rule or sovereignty. *Were a school*—would be a valuable lesson.

Stanza 44. Storm and agitation are the very life-breath of their nostrils and they are sick of serenity.

Breath—the atmosphere they breathe. *Their breath is agitation*—they can not live without hurry. *A storm*...a perpetual bustling to and fro. *Their life.....at last*—**Expl.** Their life is like a whirlwind over which they ride for a time but which at last hurries them to destruction.

A storm.....ride—suggested by Addision: 'To ride the whirlwind and control the storm.'

Bigoted to strife—prejudiced in favour of strife. *So nursed.....strife*—so much in love with contention. *Melt to calm twilight*—end in comparative peace and calm. (Their lives are full of violence and they dislike it if their end is calm.) *Supineness*—dulness. *They feel.....supineness*—are overcome with weariness if the evening of their days is restful. *Unfed* i. e. with oil.

Even as a flame.....flickering—**Expl.** As the fire that is unfed with oil dies because of its very shining, so they become tired of their very existence. *Laid by*—kept useless.

St. 45. It is the highest peaks which are wrapt in clouds and snow; so it is the great around whom envy and contention rage at their strongest.

N. B. Mr. Tozer's note on the passage seems to be absolutely indefensible. According to him, the comparison is between the great man and the mountaineer ; but that would destroy all the poetry of the passage.—The true point of comparison must undoubtedly be between the lofty mountain-peaks, lonely in their very loftiness—and the great men of the earth who are mostly solitary at heart.—The structure of the stanza may be thus analysed : In the first two lines the poet speaks of the solitude and loneliness of great men ; in the second verse, he speaks of the envy and hate which great men receive from their contemporaries ; and in the rest of the stanza he developes the second idea.

Most wrapt—entirely surrounded by. *The loftiest peaks... snow*—in other words, they keep themselves to themselves ; they are entirely detached and solitary ; and the implication is that great men also are solitary like them. *Must look down on*—must be compelled to look down on ; in other words, are sure to receive.

Though high above.....beneath etc—**N. B.** The idea may be thus given :—those who are great are most solitary and in one sense unfortunate. Fame is above them like a glory of light ; the earth is below them as symbolical of their sway over it : but round them are clouds of hostility and spite.

Icy rocks—these being an emblem of the hostility which they meet from their contemporaries. *Naked*—defenceless. *Contending tempests*—the rage of party-strife and contention. *Thus reward the toils etc*—Strife and hostility are the reward of all their labour.

St. 46. The poet bids final adieu to Waterloo and the reflections suggested by the bloody field :—Knowledge and nature—these are the true world of the wise.

Away with these—a truce to reflections like these. *Within its own creation*—namely, among the images of fancy.

True Wisdom's world etc.—**Expl.** The wise man will be most at home amidst the beauties of nature and amidst the creations of his own fancy. (His real world will be not in this earth of strife and contention but in an intellectual and beautiful world of his own creation.)

Blazon—technical name for the 'emblem' painted upon the shield.

Lent a.....shields—furnished them with emblems with which they decorated their shields. *Would glide*—would nestle quietly in their hearts. *Mail on iron hearts*—the iron panopoly of their stern bosoms.

Through all the.....glide—**Expl.**—Their hearts were hard like their own mail-armour; yet love would penetrate beneath this defence and enter into their bosom.

Their flame—the essence even of their love. *But still fierceness*—There was a fury in their love. *Drew on keen contest*—Even their love was the cause of furious struggles.

Fair mischief—fair source of mischief. Mr. Tozer's interpretation 'mischievous fair one' seems to be uncalled for. *Discoloured Rhine*—namely, discoloured with blood.

St. 50. The valley of the Rhine I could look upon it as the pavement of Heaven, could I forget my sorrows.

Exulting—rejoicing. *Abounding*—full to the brim. *Exulting.....river*—rejoicing in the fulness of your strength. *Making.....blessing*—with your waves bringing benediction to the lands on your shores. *Would endure for ever*—would be eternal.

Could man.....creation so—if man only left it alone; if man did not seek to mar your beauty with his impious handiwork. *Thy beauty.....creation so*—your beauty would be eternal if man could keep off his hands from you. *Fair promise*—the promise of beauty which your banks hold forth. *Mow*—cut away. *Nor this fair promise.....conflict*—if the struggles and war of men did not destroy the fair promise of your beauty.

Then to see—i.e., if men left you alone. *Then to see thy valley etc.* if you could behold your beauty unpolluted by the hands of man. *Were to know.....Heaven*—and that would be like a glimpse of the pavement of Heaven. *Earth paved like Heaven* Byron is thinking of the words of Revelation—'The pavement of Heaven was Jasper and Chalcedony'. (This earth would shine like the pavement of Heaven if men ceased to meddle with it.)

To seem such to me—to appear as the pavement of Heaven even now. (**Expl.** Even now I could look upon you as the pavement of heaven, if your waters could make me forget my sorrows.)

That it.....Lethe be—that it should make me forget my sorrows. (Lethe was the river of oblivion in Hell.)

St. 51. Thy waters have washed away the stain of a thousand battles and of heaped-up slaughter; but they are powerless to wash away the memory of my sorrow.

Half their fame—fame in the sense of memory. *But these.....passed away*—The battles and their memories have perished.—*And slaughter*—and so has perished the memory of the slaughter which piled your banks with heaps of the slain. *What are they*—Why should we speak of the slaughter of the past? *Thy tide.....yesterday*—Thy tide has washed away even the blood spilt yesterday.

Glassed with...sunny ray—*Ray* is the subject of *glassed*. The rays of the sun with their quivering brightness have mirrored themselves on your clear stream.

Blackened memory's...dream—the desolate memories of my past life. *All sweeping*...A hyphen between the words would make the meaning clear. *But ever the blackened...they seem*—All sweeping as your waters seem to be, they would be powerless to wash away the stain of my misery.

St. 52. Yet Harold was not wholly insensible to the charm and beauty of the scene. A transient gleam of gladness would steal over his face in spots like this.

Inly said—reflected to himself. *Not insensible to all*—not callous to the beauty of the scene. *All which here...song*—all the gladsome influence of the scene. *Awoke—song*—prompted the birds to sing early.

Which might...dear—might have reconciled men even to banishment. *Graven*—traced; imprinted. *Austere*—harsh; sad.

Though on his brow...austere—lines of grave thought had imprinted themselves upon his brow.

Fierier—more fervid and passionate.

Less severe—in the sense of 'more tender.' *Feelings'...severe*—i.e., feelings of love. (Tumultuous feelings of love which once

excited his heart had long given place to austere sternness). *Would steal...trace*—would pass swiftly along A feeling of gladness would sometimes swiftly spread over his face in spots like this.

St. 53. Nor was love altogether a stranger to his heart. There was one fond bosom at least in which he could confide and trust,—The reference is to his half-sister Augusta, who was now Mrs. Leigh, and between whom and the poet there always subsisted a feeling of the most tender affection.

Nor was...from him—nor was he a stranger to love. *Had consumed...dust*—though his love had burnt itself out ; though feelings of love had crumbled to dust in his heart.

Coldly—with indifference. *On such...us*—those who look pleasantly upon us.

To--in response to. *The heart...kindness*—The heart eagerly responds to the manifestation of kindness. *Hath weaned it*—may have cured it of its liking for.

The heart...worldlings—Though we may have grown sick of the hypocrisy of the world, yet we cannot resist manifestations of kindness.

Worldlings—beings wrapt up in thoughts of the world. *Soft remembrance*—memory of softer feelings. *One fond breast*—referring to his sister. *To which...melt*—towards whom his heart would be softened to tenderness. *On that...dwelt*—his memory dwelt on her.

St. 54. Also he had learnt to love children in the bloom of their innocent infancy.

Strange of mood- a strange and unaccountable feeling.

Blooming infancy—children in all the bloom of their innocent beauty. *Even in its earliest nature*—in their first stage of infancy.

What subdued etc.—what softened to such a tender frame of mind.

So far imbued--so thoroughly charged. *Boots*—profits. *Thus it was*—so it had happened. *Nipped affections*—affections stunted in their growth. (Nipped=cut short.) *Though in solitude...grow*—though solitude does not conduce to the growth of love and affection.

This—viz. tenderness for children. *When all beside...glow*—when all other feelings had subsided.

St- 55 (Again refers to his sister.) Their love had stood the test of mortal enmity. Well might Harold greet her thus from a foreign land.

Stronger ties = bonds of stronger affection. *Than...withal*—than that with which the Church binds men and women. *Withal*, here as elsewhere, has been mistakenly used by Byron in the sense of *with*

That love—the love of brother and sister. *Far above the disguise*—it does not require any concealment. *Had stood test of mortal enmity*—"had incurred the risk of bitter hostility"

Had stood.....undivided—had survived though faced with bitter enmity. *Cemented*—strengthened ; consolidated.

Dreaded most.....eyes—an obscure line. Mr. Tozer says—'because of the natural timidity of woman's character.' The poet seems rather to mean that this sort of pure affection is worst spoken of by women, because of the natural spite and malice of their disposition. (Does the poet glance at his personal history here ?)

That heart—the staunch and tender heart of his sister. *Absent greeting*—greetings from distant shores.

1. Most beautiful is this Rhine land with its variegated loveliness : but its charm would be heightened if you could be with me here.

The castled crag—The castle of Drachenfals crowns the summit of the highest peak of the 'seven mountains' as they are called.

Frowns over—looks grimly over. *Winding Rhine*—the Rhine with its sinuous course. (The castle stands on the bank of the Rhine opposite to Baden.) *Broadly swells*—swells with its pride of waters ; flows majestically between the banks.

Which bear the vine—it will be best to place a *semi-colon* after 'vine' instead of a *comma*.

Hills—subject of 'strewed' in 1 504. *Blossomed*—blossoming, blossom-covered.

Crowning these—Grammatically, 'these' ought to agree with *fields* ; but we do not speak of 'cities' crowning 'fields'

though we might speak of cities crowning streams. Here, evidently, the banks of the river are meant. *Have strewed*—have stretched out before us, have spread open before us.

2. All is beautiful here: rocks, castles, flowers and flower-like girls. Only the clasp of thy hand is wanting.

Deep—with a look of unfathomable mystery in their eyes.

This paradise—this enchanting and beautiful valley of the Rhine. *Feudal towers*—towers erected in feudal times. *Walls of gray*—walls of gray stone. *Steeply lowers*—frowns from their precipitous height.

Noble arch—standing for a noble mansion. *This vale... bowers*—this valley dotted with vine clusters.

3. I send you an offering of lilies; they will have withered when they reach you; but do not reject them for that, because they come from me.

Given to me—by the peasant girls mentioned in *l* 506. *As such*—because they are withered. *Cherished them as dear*—Treasured them as precious things. *Because they.....eye*—on the chance that they will meet your eye. *And guide even here*—and induce you to think of me. *Nigh*—*i.e.*, near you. *From my heart*—as a token of my sincere affection.

4. This valley is so beautiful that the haughtiest being may be contented to dwell here.

The charm—in apposition with river. (It is the river which is the charm of this enchanted ground.) *The charm*—the source of this magic power. (It is the river which constitutes all the loveliness of this valley.) We had best place a *semi-colon* after 'ground.'

All its thousand turns—the thousand bends and windings of the river.

Varying round—different from what preceded. *Its wish might bound*—might so curb.—so limit its wish as to be content to dwell here. *Still sweeten more*—give an additional loveliness.

Stanzas 56-57.

The author is still travelling along the banks of the Rhine. Coblentz greets him first and recalls memories of Marceau.

St. 56. Coblentz and the tomb of Merceau ; he battled to resume the rights of France.

On a rise of gentle ground—on a gentle swell of the ground ; on a gently sloping mound. *Verdant mound*—the green slope.

Heroe's ashes—perhaps referring to the fact that General Hoche was buried in the same tomb with Marceau. (**N. B.** *Heroes* is in the plural, while *enemy's* in the next line is in the singular. This apparent inconsistency has caused some trouble to conscientious annotators ; but the student will simply put away from him all such artificial difficulties. The sense in either case is absolutely clear.

Our enemies—because they both belonged to France.

Marceau—General of the French Republic and remarkable for his bravery and magnanimity. He was killed by a rifle ball at a place called Altenkirchen on the 31st. of December 1796. Arch-Duke Charles, the general of the enemy, waited upon his funeral.

Such a doom—viz., the privilege of dying for France. *To resume*—to restore.

St. 57. Friends and foes bewailed the death of 'his Freedom's champion.

Two hosts—two armies. *Freedom's champion*—a sworn defender of liberty. *The charter*—privilege, liberty. *Had not overstept the charter*—had not abused his privilege. *She*—i. e., Liberty. *Wield her weapons*—wield weapons in defence of her cause.

One of those...weapons—Those who war in defence of Liberty—Liberty gives them a certain right to chastise her foes. (They are privileged to chastise the enemies of Liberty; but Marceau was one of the very few who never overstepped the limits of such power.)

Had kept.....soul—had preserved the virgin innocence of his character. *Whiteness*—purity ; innocence.

Stanzas 58-62.

After a passing tribute to the strong fortress of Ehrenbreitstein the poet proceeds to take leave of the Rhine. But he pauses and bids a final farewell to the majestic river.

St. 58. The castle of Ehrenbreitstein ! The iron showers of war could do no harm to it ; but peace has brought about its end.

Ehrenbreitstein—one of the strongest fortresses in Europe; was dismantled and blown up by the French after the peace of Luneville in 1798 It had withstood a long seige and surrendered only to famine.

Black.....blast—grimmed with the powder used in mining. (The walls had been mined and counter-mined in the course of the siege, and bore grim marks of these operations.)

Of what she was—of what strength she was. *Rebounding idly*—The technical word is 'ricochetting' ; used of shots or balls which bound back from obstacles without harm.

Her strength—her strong walls. *Blight*—waste. *Iron shower*—i. e , of balls and shells. The contrast is between the *iron hail* of bullets and the *gentle rain*—of summer. Once it was impervious to bullets ; now even the rain of summer finds its way into the dismantled castle.

St. 59. Lovers and people fond of contemplation all alike find delight on your banks.

Fain.....way—would gladly prolong his journey on your banks. *Souls united*—i.e , in love. *Lonely contemplation*—people fond of solitude and reflection. *The ceaseless...prey*—the unending torture of remorse. *Self-condemning bosom*—persons who are their own severest judges. *It were here*—because of the surpassing loveliness of the place. *Not rude*—not bleak or savage. *Awful*—awe-inspiring; majestic. *Austere*...harsh and stern.

Is to the mellow Earth...year—**Expl.** What Autumn is to the year, that is the beauty of such a place to the earth. In other words, just as Autumn lends softness and mellowness to the year, so the beauty of the Rhine-land lends a softness and charm to the earth.

Stanzas 60—61 There can be no final leave-taking from a place like this. Other and grander spots may rise to the view but none which holds so many beauties in such enviable combination.

St. 60. *Vain adieus*—the reason is given in the next line.

No farewell...no real farewell; no final leave-taking, because the image of the place is brilliant and lives long in the memory.

Is coloured by—receives impression from. *The mind... ...hue*—all your changing colours leave their impression upon the mind. *Resign.....gaze upon thee* i.e., cease to look upon it ; give up their right to look upon it. *Cherished gaze* the treasured privilege of looking upon it. *Mighty*—grand ; vast. *More glaring*—i.e. spots more striking in their beauty. *One attaching maze*—a beautiful medley ; a harmonious combination of many different species of beauty.

The glories of etc.—memories of historical associations. These are some of the elements which contribute to make up the fair, soft and brilliant beauty of the Rhine.

St. 61. *The negligently grand etc.*—The poet proceeds to enumerate some of those features which contribute to the veriegated beauty of the scenery.

The negligently grand—the beauty which springs from uncultivated wildness.

The fruitful.....ripeness—The beauty of fertile abundance.

Sheen—beauty, brightness.

The precipice's gloom—the shadowy grandeur of the mountains.

Gothic walls—i.e, medieval castles peeping out from among the forest.

In mockery of man's art—as if in mimicry of man's art. (The beauties of rocks, forests and streams ; of cultivated fields and smiling orchards ; as well as the beauty of ancient Gothic castles are to be found here.)

These withal—together with these. *Whose fertile bounties*—whose abundant harvest ; referring to 'scene' in the preceding line.

Still springing.....fall—a contrast between the perennial growth of nature and the short lived greatness of man.—Empires may fall, but the corn will continue to grow as usual.

Stanza 62 The Rhine recedes ; and the peaks of the Alps —thrones of eternity—slowly rise into view.

These recede—the beauty of the Rhine fades from the view.

Have pinnacled.....scalps—have shot up their summits to the sky. (*Scalps* would refer to the rounded top of the mountains. So Coleridge speaks of *the bald and awful head* of Mr. Blank. But *pinnacle* means a tapering or pointed turret.

Hence, there is incongruity in the idea of the scalps being pinnacled.)

Throned Eternity—to be taken in connection with 'vast walls' in line 592. 'These ice-covered heights of the Alps seem to have eternity throned within their walls.' In other words, eternity seems to have her habitation within these icy walls.

Avalanche—properly, a snow-river which is formed when the snow begins to melt. *The thunderbolt of snow*—so called because of the resistless impetuosity of its march. *Expands the spirit*—enlarges the bounds of conception.

All that expands.....summits—Whatever may uplift the spirit of man and at the same time frighten it is associated with these peaks. *As to show*—as if the object of the mountain is to show.

How earth.....below—**Expl.** The earth in the shape of these mountains reaches up to the Heaven, while vain man is left crawling below. The poet means to say that even the inanimate earth may rise superior to man;—it reaches to the skies, while he is left below.

Stanzas 63 & 64.

Morat, where the power of Burgundy was finally overthrown by the Swiss. [It will be noticed that the author has now entered Switzerland and the following are the places which he passes and describes:—(1) Morat, (2) Aventicum, (3) Lake Leman, (4) Rousseau, (5) Leman again, (6) Clarens, (7) Lausanne and Ferney.]

Stanza 63—Before passing finally on to gaze upon the Alps, the author stops to chronicle the glory of Morat.

These matchless heights—these lofty peaks of the Alps. *To scan*—to view from near. *In vain*—without notice.

Morat—a place east of the lake of Neuchatel, where the forces of the Duke of Burgundy were defeated and almost annihilated by the army of the Swiss Confederation in 1476.

Patriot field—so called because the battle fought there was in defence of Liberty against the futile pretensions of the Dukes of Burgundy.

Ghastly trophies of the slain—horrible piles of slaughter.

Nor blush etc.—because the cause for which they fought was a worthy one. *Tombless host*—so called because the dead were unburied.

Bony heap—15,000 Burgundian soldiers were killed in the battle and the Swiss gathered their bones into a huge ossuary or bone hill. But this ossuary was scattered by the Burgundian legions of the French army in 1798.

Themselves their monuments—their skeletons were their only mementos.

The Stygian coast etc.—referring to the ancient classical idea that the ghosts of the unburied were not permitted to cross the Styx but roamed disconsolate on this side of the river.

Unsepulchred—unburied. *The Stygian coast*—this side of the river of Hell. *Shrieked*—because they were spirits unblest.

Stanza 64. Waterloo and Cannæ were only monuments of slaughter · but Morat and Marathan were stainless victories of true glory.

Waterloo with Cannae etc. **N. B.** These stand on the same footing, says the poet, for they were mere contests for world power ; while Morat and Marathon were fought in defence of Liberty. (*Cannae* the great battle where Hannibal defeated the Roman army in B. C. 216.)

Carnage vies competes in point of slaughter. *Twin names shall stand*...are fit to be mentioned together. *Stainless victory*...blameless. because achieved in defence of freedom.

Civic band—a citizen army as distinguished from the hired army which fought under Wellington and Hannibal. *Unbought champion*—again referring to the fact that these soldiers fought voluntarily : they had not been hired to fight.

Princely.....Corruption—Mark the sarcasm of the epithet. The cause of princes is the cause of Corruption.

Civic band.....Corruption—These citizen-soldiers fought for the cause of freedom and not for the cause of princes, which again is the cause of Corruption.

Vice-entailed—born out of vice. *They*—*i.e.*, conquerors of Morat and Marathon. *Doomed*—condemned. *Blasphemy*—profanation.

Draconic clause—harsh, severe clause. Draco or Dracon, being asked to codify the law of Athens, attached the death penalty to every offence, (B. C. 624.)

They no land.....clause—They do not impose their laws upon any unfortunate country—laws which. by harsh and penal clauses, confer divine authority on kings.

Blasphemy of laws—travesty, prostitution of the name of law ; so called, because they pretend to confer divire right on kings.

Stanzas 65 to 67.

The ruins of Aventicum suggest memories of Julia Alpinula.

St 65. One lonely column, sad relic of levelled Aventicum, rears itself from the surrounding ruins.

The last remnant &c.—this column being the sole relic of the ruins of Aventicum. *Looks—i.e.*, upon the neighbouring scene of desolation.

Wild-bewildered gaze—the puzzled, dazed look of one converted to stone but still retaining his consciousness.

Making.....decays—and the only marvel is that this also has not decayed with the other structures of the same date.

The coeval.....hands—the proud buildings which were coeval with this column in point of date.

Levelled Aventicum—the ruins of Aventicum ; in apposition with "pride" in l. 624. *Her subject lands*—the lands which were once subject to Aventicum viz. the surrounding country of Helvetia.

St 66. Aventicum recalls the memory of Julia, who, pleading vainly for her father's life, died of grief for him.

The daughter—'the unfortunate daughter of an unfortunate father', as she is described in the epitaph to which Byron refers in his notes and which Byron evidently regarded as genuine. But it has been proved conclusively that this epitaph was a forgery of the 17th Century.

Gave.....Heaven—died out of grief for her father.

A claim nearest to Heaven's—i.e., the claim of filial affection,

Sworn against tears—sworn not to pay any heed to tears ; not to take into account the claims of pity or compassion. (Justice must be uninfluenced by considerations of pity, and so justice could pay no heed to Julia's tears.)

Hers —*i.e.*, her tears.

The life she lived in—the life of her father, a life in which she was wholly wrapped up. (The story is this :—When Caecina, General of the Roman emperor, Vitellius, captured the city of Aventicum in A. D. 69, he put to death Julius Alpinus, one of the chief men of the city, on the charge of having instigated opposition against Rome. His daughter vainly pleading for her father's life died over his tomb.)

Simple —unmarked by memorials. *One mind &c.* = referring to the complete unison between father and daughter.

St. 67. Empires may hasten to decay but deaths like that of Julia will never perish.

Which...away—which the world will not forget. *Must not wither*—must not perish, *Forget*—dooms to fogetfulness.

The high...majesty—The majesty of true worth will survive the misery which it may have suffered in life. The expression is clumsy as the sentiment is commonplace.

The high—*i.e.* the mountain-high majesty of worth. *Should be...woe*—will outlive the misery of its life. *Its immortality*—the immortality of fame which it will enjoy after death.

Look forth...face—look proudly in the eye of day. *Yonder Alpine snow*—so called because Byron is now in sight of the Alps.

N. B. The substance of the latter part of the stanza may be thus given. 'If a man is truly great, then the memory of the trouble he suffered in his life will pass away ; but the majesty of his spirit will remain and will continue to look men proudly in the face just as the snow-clad peaks of yonder Alps rise proudly towards the sky.'

Stanzas 68-75.

[Lake Leman : moralizings upon his own love of Nature and unfitness for Society.]

St. 68. The crystal waters of Lake Leman. I have too much of man's grossness in me, fitly to grasp the significance of the wild majesty of Nature.

Woos me—courts me, invites me. *Its crystal face*—the pellucid face of its waters. *The stillness of their aspects*—their calm and tranquil features. *Yields*—reflects.

The mirror.....height and hue—the mirror which clearly reflects every feature of the distant stars and mountains.

Too much of man—too much of the grossness of human character *Here—i.e.*, in my composition.

To look through with a fit mind—fitly to grasp and understand the majesty of nature which I behold.

But soon in me.....thoughts hid—But solitude will soon restore my former capacity for loving and understanding nature.

Thoughts—i.e., concerning the meaning and significance of nature. *Hid*—which have been in abeyance for sometime. *Penned me in their fold*—cribbed and confined my imagination; cramped the nature of my soaring thoughts. *With the herd*:—*i.e.*, the vulgar herd of mankind.

N B.—The thoughts which I formerly cherished but which were blotted out from my mind because I mixed with mankind for a time—they will return to me again in solitude.

St. **69.** [What he has said above raises the question of the poet's attitude toward humanity: and here is the apology he makes] It is not misanthropy to seek to escape from society nor is it discontent to keep one self-centered, buried deep in his own thought.

To fly from.....mankind—From what has been said above about too much of man's grossness, it might be inferred that I hated mankind. But desire to fly from man does not necessarily imply hatred of the species.

Need not.....mankind—does not necessarily mean hatred of mankind. *With them.....toil*—to enter into ceaseless conflict with mankind.

*All are not fit etc....*Here the poet gives his reason for seeking to escape from mankind. 'I am unfit to take part in the struggle of life.'

Nor.....discontent—nor is it sign of discontent. *Deep fountain*—self-centred; absorbed in its own thoughts! *It*—referring to 'mind' above. *Lest it over-boil*—lest its thoughts brim over and thus expose themselves.

To keep the mind—hot throng—**Expl.** I keep myself to myself in order that my thoughts may not, unseasonably be exposed to the gaze of the multitude.

Hot throng...the dusty multitude of toiling humanity. *Where we become.. ...infection*—where we catch the contagion of the prevailing restlessness. *Become the spoil*—i.e. become the victims. *Our infection*—where we catch the contagion of the world's restlessness; the contagion which we spread or rather which we receive

Till too late and long—'Too late we begin and too long we continue to mourn for having joined in the struggle of life.'

The coil—the restless stir and turmoil of the world; this coil of wretched circumstance as life has been called.

In wretched interchange etc.—This is the character of the struggle in which we all engage; we give wrongs and we receive wrongs.

A contentious world—a world of strife and misery. *Where none are strong*—and where consequently the struggle is most miserable.

St. 70. In the vortex of society we may do things in a moment which will plague us with remorse for years to come; and life is an aimless add purposeless flight to those who are tortured with remorse.

In a moment—by one act of imprudence.

May plague.....penitence—In one moment we may do things which will vex us with remorse for years to come. *Blight*...desolation.

In the blight.....tears—Our misery will be so extreme that all our blood will turn into tears as it were.

Things to come—the whole of our future life.

With hues of night—with darkness and despair. **N. B.** All this may be the result of one single act of imprudence; (1) it may vex us with remorse for ever more; (2) it may turn our blood to tears; (3) it may throw a hue of despair over all the rest of our life.

The race of life—standing for life itself. *A hopeless flight*—a fruitless attempt to escape from misery. *That walk in darkness*—who are plagued incessantly by remorse. *Where their ports invite*—towards a fixed goal. *Wanderers of eternity*

—human beings ; contrasted with mariners who voyage through the sea. *Whose bark*—the vessel of whose life. *Drives on and on*—drifts aimlessly along. *Anchored.....be*—will never reach a goal.

N.B. The substance of the last four lines may be thus given : 'At sea even the boldest mariner steers in the direction of some fixed goal ; but in life there are many who drift aimlessly and purposelessly along'.

St. 71. It is better then to be alone and to love nature for her own sake only.

For its earthly sake—i e. for nature alone, quite irrespective of humanity. *The arrowy Rhone*—referring to the swiftness snd impetuosity of the river. *The pure bosom*—the tranquil waters.

Its nursing lake—Lake Leman from which the Rhone takes its rise. *Forward*—fretful. *Her own care*—her special object of attention. *Kissing away*—soothing it with kisses.

Which feeds it etc—**Expl.** Just as a mother feeds a fretful child and soothes it with kisses so Leman feeds and soothes the waters of the Rhone.

Thus.....wear—to spend our days in the contemplation of nature's beauty.

To inflict...bear—to give sorrow or to recevie sorrow—such being the only fate of humanity.

The crushing crowd—the struggling multitude of the world.

St 72 Nature takes me out of myself and steeps me in her ever lasting loveliness. My only regret is that I should be classed among men when I can mingle my being with sky, field and sea.

I live.....myself—I do not lead a separate, divided existence (viz. when I am thus surrounded by the beauties of nature.) *I become.....around me*—I become one with the might and loveliness of nature. *Are a feeling*—inspire me with noble emotion.

The hum.....torture—The noisy bustle of the world is a source of torment to me. *Save to be*—save to think that I am. *A link.....chain*—a reluctant link between nature and humanity.' **Expl.** 'My only regret is that I am an unwilling bond of connection between Nature and the mass of humanity.'

Classed among creatures—my only regret is that I am classed among human beings.

The heaving.....ocean—"the houseless water's heaving field" as Tennyson has called it.

When the soul.....not in vain—when the soul can escape from the sordid cares of humanity and lose its being in the abounding life of nature.

St. 73. True life is in this absorption in Nature ; and I look upon my years of fashionable social existence as a period of penance.

Absorbed—drawn up into the life of nature ; made one with nature. *This*—viz. this union with nature's being.

The peopled desert past—the arid waste of society, in which erewhile I passed my days. *Agony and strife*—pain and contention. *For some sin*—to expiate for some sin. *To sorrow I was cast*—I was destined to suffer sorrow.

But remount.....pinion—But though destined to suffer for a time, I was permitted at last to remount with fresh pinions i. e., with renewed strength of wing.

Which I feel to spring—and here, in the shores of Leman, it seems as if these fresh pinions are springing from my sides.

Yet waxing.....cope with—growing as strong and vigorous as the tempest with which it has to battle.

Though young &c....My wing power though young is growing as vigorous as the blast &c.

Which... ..cope with...aganist which it will have to contend. *Spurning* flinging aside with contempt. *Clay-cold*—dull, earthly. *The Clay-cold...cling*—the dull wrappages of earth which hinder our flight. **Expl** :—I would like to spurn the bondage of this earth and to mount into the sky upon wings of fancy ; and here, upon the shores of Leman, I feel these wings springing from my side.

St. 74. And when I am free from the encumbrance of the body, shall I not be more at home with nature as part and parcel of my very self ?

Shall be all free—shall be altogether free from the bondage of the earth. *From what.....form*—viz. from this bondage of the body. *When at length.....form*—when I die : when the soul will be freed from the fetters of the flesh. *Reft of its*

carnal life—when the soul's connection with the body will be severed.

Save what shall be.....worm—save that part which will pass into the body of worms (The whole of my body will perish—excepting only that part which will pass into the body of worms.)

What shall be existent happier etc.—what will pass into the bodies of flies and worms and enjoy happier existence there.

When elements to elements conform—when dust returns to dust. *Dust is as it should be*—merely repeats the same idea. *More warm*—more genial.

Shall I not feel.....warm—**Expl**: When I am freed from the bondage of flesh, nature will be less dazzling to me (for I shall be part of herself), but I shall be more at home with her.

Bodiless thought—take it with 'shall I not' in l. 703. In other words, shall I not, as the bodiless thought of each place. be more at home with nature?' (Bodiless thought = unbodied idea.)

The Spirit of each spot—the presiding genius of each place.

Of which.....immortal lot—Even now at times I feel myself one with nature. Then, when I am dead, when I have become a bodiless idea, shall I not be more completely at one with nature ?

St. 75. Is not nature part of my very soul? and am I not ready to live a life of suffering rather than give up thinking of her?

Deep—i.e., deep-rooted. *Contemn*—despise. *Stem...suffering*—live a whole life of misery. *Forego*—abandon. *Such feelings*—feelings of love and affection for nature. *For*—in favour of. *Hard.....phlegm*—the cold, worldly wisdom of the base creatures of the earth. *Dare not glow—i.e.*, dare not glow with enthusiasm for nature.

And stem.....turned below—**Expl.** I would live a life of misery rather than give up these tender and affectionate thoughts and change them for the base, material wisdom of worldlings.

Stanzas 76-84

Leman leads on to thoughts of Rousseau and there follows a wonderful character-sketch of Jean Jacques. The poet swiftly touches on the salient features of Rousseau's life and genius :—his one desire was to be glorious (St. 76); he was a self-torturing sophist and a master of word-painting (St- 77); a lover of ideal beauty (St. 78); and a mad man at war with his kind.

St. 76. Those who like to moralise upon the grave let them look upon one whose soul was of fire.

This—viz. this talk of myself and my attitude towards nature. *That which is immediate*—the immediate subject of my verse, viz. Rousseau. *Who find... ..urn*—who like to moralise upon the grave. (Urn = properly the vessel in which the ashes of the dead were collected; hence standing for graves and tombs generally.)

Whose dust—whose life.

Was once all fire—aflame with native imspiration and idealism. *A native of the land*—Rousseau was born at Geneva in 1712. *A passing guest*—*i.e.*, where I am a passing guest. *He became a being*—where he became one with the soul of things; where his genius transfused itself into all surrounding things. *It was a foolish quest*—It viz. this quest of glory *All rest*—all peace and quiet of the mind

St. 77. Rousseau was the apostle of affliction: but he knew how to weave a magic web of words over his madness and passion.

The self-torturing sophist—so called because of his excessive proneness to suspicion, or because of his habit of morbid self-analysis—a habit of self-analysis which led to the production of that strange, wild and passionate work—the *Confessions*.

Sophist—a spinner of words. (Byron here touches with keen insight upon the strength and weakness of Rousseau's genius.)

Apostle—eloquent advocate. Here it should be an eloquent painter. *Who threw.....passion*—who wove a magic garment of words over the subject of love. *Passion*—perhaps in the sense of lawless passion—for it is lawless passion which is dealt with in the *Nouvelle Heloise* and Byron is evidently thinking of that book here.

Wrung—distilled, extracted. *From woe.....eloquence*—fed his eloquence upon misery; waxed eloquent on the inspiration of misery. *The breath.....wretched*—that life which for him was full of misery. *Erring deeds and thoughts*—referring to the lawless passion of St. Preux and Julie, the hero and heroine of the *Nouvelle Heloise.*

Heavenly hue—a garment of divine beauty. *Cast ..hue*—clothed the subject of illicit amour in a magic garment of words. *Dazzling.....eyes*—words which charm and dazzle the sense of the reader.

St. 78. Rousseau was blasted with excess of love, but his love was for ideal beauty.

Was passion's essence—was the very soul of passion *i e.*, was animated with pure and genuine passion. *Ethereal flame*—the divine passion of love. *Kindled...blasted*—This love was both his inspiration and his death,

As a tree...blasted—**Expl.** As a tree is killed by the lightning which sets it on flame so he was blasted (his mind was deranged) by the passion which kindled and inspired his mind.

To be thus—i. e., to be blasted.

To be thus...flame—**Expl.** Love and madness were inseparable to him; to love and to be frenzied were one and the same to him.

But his was not...dreams—But his love was not for any actual woman either living or dead; his love was of ideal beauty *Which became...existence*—ideal beauty which seemed to assume shape and form before his vivid imagination. *Overflowing ..page*—his heart brimmed over with this subject and he filled his book with burning eloquence. *Distempered*—diseased. (His books seem to be the work of a diseased mind; but it is the insanity of burning eloquence and genius.)

St. 79. This ideal beauty took shape in the form of the Julie of his romance.

This—namely, this ideal beauty. *Breathed itself to life*—took form under the influence of his shaping fancy. *Julie*—heroine of the *Nouvelle Heloise* (The heroine of his romance was the embodiment of that ideal, imaginary beauty which he worshipped.)

Invested—endowed her. *Wild and sweet*—passionate and charming. *This*—namely, this ideal passion. *Hallowed*—consecrated.

From hers—This was Madame L' Houdetot, sister-in law of Madame D' Epinay with whom Rousseau was living at this time. He conceived a violent passion for Madame L' Houdetot and tells us in his 'Confessions' that he used to take a long walk every morning in order to receive a kiss of salutation from her ; but the lady could not return his passion with anything more than friendship. *Fevered lip*—fevered in the sense of hungry for love. *Who but with friendship...meet*—who could only entertain a cold feeling of friendship for him.

This hallowed...meet—**N. B.** We may express the substance thus : When we remember that Rousseau's love was for no creature of flesh and blood, that it was a sense of passionate worship for ideal beauty, then the kiss with which he sought to be greeted from madame L' Houdetot—it loses its earthly character and becomes transfigured in value in our eyes. We can understand that it was not the kiss of earth-born passion for which Rousseau's soul was hungry.

But to that gentle touch...heat—**Expl.** But though her kiss was the greeting of pure affection, yet it was sufficient to enkindle a fierce and passionate love in the heart of Rousseau.

That gentle touch—viz., the pure touch of sisterly affection. *Through brain and breast*—through the whole being of Rousseau. *Flashed*—passed swiftly. *Thrilled*—enraptured. *Love-devouring heat*—intense and fiery passion.

In that absorbing...blest—more happy in the failure of his love—in the absence of possession—than other, vulgar people may be even when they possess the object of their desire. (**N. B.** Others possessed, while Rousseau failed to possess. But even the failure of his passion made him happier than others.)

That absorbing sigh—namely, the sigh which was wrung from his heart by his failure to possess the object of his desire. *More blest*—because of the superior intensity of his passion. *With all...possessed*—even when they possess the object of their love.

St. 80—He was a madman at war with self-sought foes.

Self-sought foes—people whom he fancied to be enemies on account of his suspicious nature. *Self-banished*—banished

by himself. *Suspicious sanctuary*—the home and temple of suspicion. (Rousseau was always morbidly suspicious ; and this suspicion almost developed into mania during the latter years of his life. He constantly fancied that secret enemies were plotting against him.) *The kind*—viz the kindly race of man ; the human species. *Skill*—i. e. medical skill. *Frenzied*—mad. *Since cause.....find*—There might be a reason for his madness which medical skill was unable to discover. *That worst pitch*—that most dangerous point. *Which wears..... show*—when madness conceals itself under the show of reason.

St. 81. The words which he uttered in moments of inspiration set the world on flame and destroyed kingdoms.

N. B.—In this and the three following stanzas the author deals specially not with the character of Rousseau's genius but with the work accomplished by Rousseau and his companions viz the work of destroying the false customs and conventions of the past.

For then—take it as equivalent to 'but then'. *Those oracles.....flame*—those prophetic utterances which set the world on fire, which burnt up the false customs and conventions of the past.

The Pythian's mystic cave—Pythia was the priestess of Apollo at Delphi. She took her seat on a tripod over a chasm from which issued mephitic vapour. And it was when intoxicated with these fumes that she uttered oracular responses.

From him came.....flame—your messages were inspired like the utterances of the Pythian oracle. *Till kingdoms were no more*—till monarchy had ceased to exist.—A pardonable exaggeration ; for it was only in France that monarchy ceased to exist. *Bowed to the.....years*—crushed beneath the long-standing oppression of kings. *Inborn tyranny*—native tyranny ; tyranny to which one is born and in the midst of which one grows up.

Broken and trembling etc.—crushed and subdued ; humbled to bear the burden of servitude.

His compeer—referring to Diderot. Voltaire and the other writers of the *Encyclopedie*. In one sense it is a mistake to lump together Rousseau with Voltaire and Diderot. His work, like his genius, was essentially different from theirs ; yet they all, in their different ways, contributed to the growth of that

feeling of discontent and that spirit of searching analysis which more than anything else brought about the French Revolution.

Roused up too much wrath—referring to the frantic and excessive violence which marked the French Revolution in some of its phases. *Roused up too much wrath etc*—A sort of reaction of excessive violence followed upon a period of excessive timidity and weakness.

St. 82. The wreck of old opinions—things which had grown up from the beginning of the world—these were the monuments of Rousseau and his compeers. But they destroyed good also with evil and a re-action set in against their work.

They—The French generally, says Mr Tozer, and not Rousseau and his compeers. But there is nothing in support of this view. *They made.....monument*—in other words, their work had terrible consequences; referring to the cataclysm of the French Revolution. *Which grew*—which developed strength.

Breathed.....time—because men had been surrounded by them even from the very beginning of the world. They created the atmosphere, so to say, in which men had been breathing all along.—The strength of the *institutions* which the French Revolution destroyed lay in this that they had been existing for long ages so that men had grown inured to them.

The veil they rent etc—the construction is obscure. We may take it thus:—they rent the veil so that all earth might view what lay behind it.

The veil.....rent—**Expl.** They shattered to pieces the glamour which had hitherto spread over the institutions of the past. They dispelled the feeling of superstitious veneration with which people had hitherto looked upon old institutions, such, for instance, as the hereditary monarchy and the established aristocracy.

With ill.....overthrew—This was the evil side of their work. *Wherewith to rebuild...foundation*...They left only ruin behind them and the result of this was that the rebuilding proceeded upon old lines. Their work was destructive merely; they left no new principles of construction behind them; consequently, so, when the work of reconstruction began, it proceeded upon old lines. In other words, monarchies and dynasties were again set up.

Dungeons and thrones—tyranny and repression. **N. B.** Mr. Tozer takes 'dungeons' as representing the political repression of Napoleon and 'thrones' as representing the restored monarchy of the Bourbons. But there is no reason to make this kind of distinction. Byron means to imply that the work of revolution was rendered incomplete by its very violence and fury. The very institutions it had overthrown were set up again, partly as a re-action against its work.

Was self-willed—was capricious ; followed its own course, regardless of the rules of morality and justice.

But good with evil etc.—The passage is obscure both in sense and construction. The idea may be thus brought out :—The violence of their destructive fury led to a natural re-action. They strewed earth with ruins ; and the consequence was that dungeons and thrones were also refilled, re-occupied immediately ; for human ambition recks nothing of law and justice.

Stanza 83. But this re-action also will be shortlived, for men have tasted the joys of power. They might have abused their power but that was but natural.

This—viz., this reaction—the restoration of thrones and prisons. *Will not endure*—Will not last. *Nor be endured—i.e.*, endured submissively by the people. *Mankind*—here referring to the masses. *Have felt their strength*—have experienced the joys of power. *Have felt*.—They have made their power felt upon those who had hitherto been their rulers. *Allured..... vigour*—tempted by the new possession of strength. *Sternly.....one another*—Possession of power has induced them to be cruel *Natural charities*—that forbearance and consideration which is natural to pity.

But they etc.—**N. B.** Here Byron gives an apology for the abuse of power by the masses. 'These common people had not been brought up in the excercise of power ; hence what wonder that they should indulge in some abuse of power when power came to them at last !' (The simile may be thus analysed. Eagles are brought up in the light of day ; hence they never make a mistake in selecting their prey. But birds which have been brought up in the darkness of a cage, what wonder that they should make mistakes now and then !

Similarly, if the common people had been trained in the exercise of power, they would have exercised it always with rational moderation. But power had been wrongfully witheld from them; hence, what wonder that its new possession should lead to some abuse !)

Caved—caged; imprisoned. *Nourished with the day*—reared in day light, in sunlight. Divested of metaphor, it means 'trained in the exercise of power.' *It they mistook their prey*—if they were wrong in the exercise of their power.

St. 84. (Another obscure stanza. The poet continues his previous strain of thought. The present re-action against the early fury of the French Revolution will not last. The day of retribution, of popular vengeance, will come as it came once before.)

Even the deepest wounds heal, though they leave scars behind. Thus, though political tranquillity has been restored, the memory of past wrongs remains and the hour of vengeance may come. (The image is neither clear nor happy. Wounds heal; but here the poet's implication is that political wrongs do not heal.)

What deep wounds.....scar—deep wounds standing for deep-seated political wrongs. Deep wounds never heal but they leave a scar behind; so deep-seated political wrongs, though they apparently may seem to be healed, leave a rankling memory behind.

The heart's bleed.....disfigures it—a weak digression from the main line of argument. 'The deepest wounds are those which hurt the feelings; for even if they heal they leave an ugly memory behind'.

They who war.....submission—Here is the poet's application of his image. 'The people who have been vanquished, whose hopes of political liberty have been baffled—they are silent but they do not accept their fate.'

In his lair.....for years—Divested of metaphor, it means people wait with passionate determination for the hour of vengeance to come. *In his lair etc.*—The people waiting grimly for vengeance, are compared to a fierce beast of prey brooding over its wrong in some cave.

Lair—cave of wild beast. *Fixed passion*—Political passion with its iron determination. *Holds his breath*—waits in expectation of the hour of vengeance. *The hour*—namely the hour of retribution. *Shall atone for years*—shall make up for years

of oppression. *None need despair*—namely, about the coming of the hourof vengeance.

It came—in the year of the French Revolution. *It cometh*—is preparing to come again. *Will come*—will be sure to come. *In one we shall be slower*—When the hour of retribution comes, the people, who have power either to punish or to forgive, will know what to do. *In one*—namely in forgiving. *In one.....slower*—we shall be more ready to punish than to forgive.

Stanzas 85-98.

Lake Leman again. Musings upon nature. A night scene and a tempest. A pure piece of natural description in which no extraneous matter is touched upon.

The poet pictures himself as sailing gently over the peaceful bosom of the lake It is night and silence holds the scene. save where the grasshopper carols his goodnight or a rare bird breaks out into song. It is here, in the midst of such deep poetry and peace, that the meaning and music of nature flash upon the soul.

But now comes a swift change on the spirit of the scene. A storm gathers on the mountain ; forked lightning begins to flash ; and the thunder rumbles from valley to valley. But this again gives way to a happy and peaceful scene.

St. 85. Lake Leman invites the poet to leave the unquiet society of men and seek purer springs of emotion. The poet pictures himself as sailing over the bosom of the lake.

Thy contrasted lake...world—the peaceful scenery of the lake contrasted with the bustle and tumult of the world. *Earth's troubled waters*—the vortex of fashionable society, *Purer spring*—here the bosom of the lake, *Purr Spring* simply a piece of tranquil water or perhaps, a fountain of purer emotion. *This quiet sail*—The poet pictures himself as rowing in a boat. *Distraction*—the hurry of the world, *Torn oceans roar*—the loud tumult of heaving waves, *Sister's voice*—thinking of his sister whom he addressed in stanza 54, *Thy soft murmuring...moved*—The soft murmer of your waters seems to tax me for having been ever moved by the joy of the sea

St. 86. Night has set in : but except the distant Jura all else can be distinctly seen ; and there is a fragrance of flowers near the margin of the lake.

All between...mountains—the whole space between the shores of the lake and the distant mountains. *Dusk*—covered with darkness. *Mellowed and mingling*—The different features of the landscape—they seem to be merging in one another on account of the dim half-light of the evening. *Mellowed*—the features of the landscape have lost their sharpness of outline. *Darkened jura*—the shady heights of the Jura range.

Jura—a mountain-range forming part of the eastern boundary of France and standing to the northwest of Geneva. *Capt*—i.e., capped with cloud or snow. *Precipitously steep*—abrupt in their height *Drawing near*—as I draw near in my boat. *There breathes...shore*—a sweet scent of flowers comes from the shore. *Fresh with childhood*—newly born. *Light drip of suspended oar*—the soft noise of water dripping from the oar.

One good-night carol—one farewell song. *On the oar drops...carol more*—The soft noise of the falling particles of water and the chirp of the grasshopper—these are the only sounds that meet the ear.

St. 87. Save for the grasshopper and an occasional bird, all else is still.

He—i. e. grasshopper. *Evening reveller*—because he sings at night. *Who makes...infancy*—all his life is as gay as that of a child, *Sings his fill*—sings to the full satisfaction of his heart. *Brakes*—bushes. *Starts...moment*—breaks out into song for a moment. *Floating whisper*—a light and gentle sound. *That is a fancy*—that seems to be the delusion of fancy. *Star light dews*—dews coloured with star light. *All silently...instil*—fall drop by drop in perfect silence. *Weeping themselves away*—falling in showers like tear-drops. *Infuse*—impart. *The spirit of her hues*—the delicacy of her colours

The star light dews...her hues—**Expl.** The dews, lighted up with the rays of the stars, communicate the delicacy of their colours to nature; but they fall silently and therefore cannot make such a whisper as I have been fancying.

St. 88. (It is a beautiful, starlit night.) Men are to be forgiven if, tempted by the beauty of stars, they seek to claim kindred with them, namely by affecting to read their history in the gaze of the stars.

Which are heaven—which constitute the charm and brightness of the sky. *Your bright leaves*—in your radiant pages *i.e* in your fire. *We would read...empires*—referring to the fact that men affect to read their future by consulting the stars. *It is to be forgiven*—They ought to be forgiven this delusion, namely, that there is some mystic communion between men and stars.

Overleap their mortal state—break through the barrier of flesh ; forget the limitation of their mortal nature (**N. B.** In our desire to be great we forget the limitation of our earthly nature and fancy that we are allied to the stars ; hence the pretence of learning our future by consulting the stars.)

And claim...you—and affect to believe in the existence of some mystic relation between you and themselves. *That fortune, fame etc* **Expl.** We love and reverence you so much that we designate all the higher objects of life with the names of stars. (The reference is to such phrases as the star of fortune, star of power &c.)

St. 89. Heaven and earth are breathless and still. An intense life seems to breathe from the stars above and lakes below—a life in which every particle of nature seems to be endowed with existence and a consciousness of the Creator—A half pantheistic stanza in which the influence of Shelley, with whom the poet was living at this time, is clearly felt. But the stanza is obscure just as Byron's pantheism also was an obscure and half-formed creed and not one in which he intensely and firmly believed.]

Not in sleep...most—This stillness comes not from sleep or suspended vitality but from more intense and vivid animation as it were. (Nature seems still not because her life has been suspended, but because her life has become more intense and concentrated, just as we are most still when our emotions are most intense.)

Silent...deep—her silence is due to the same cause. She is silent just as we are silent when we think most intensely. *Lulled lake*—the hushed bosom of the lake. *All is concentrated intense*—An intense and vivid life seems to be filling the whole space from the stars above to the mountain-coast below.

Where not a beam etc.—Byron's pantheism comes in here. The life which fills the whole atmosphere is so vivid, deep and keen that every individual object of nature seems to share in the

intensity of its existence. Nothing in nature, neither starlight, nor air nor leaf seems to be bereft of life ; rather they all share in the great life of universel nature. *Hath a part of being*—each of these seems to be endowed with existence. *And a sense*—i. e., and seems to be gifted with the consciousness of the pervasive presence of God. *Of that...defence*—namely, God Himself.

St 90. The truth and mystery of the universe are most-thoroughly felt in scenes like these.

The feeling infinite—a sense of infinity ; the sense that we are one with the infinite soul of things. *So felt...alone*—which is most intensely realized in solitude. *A truth*—namely, the truth concerning the Universe and God. *Which ...melt*—which thrills through our whole being. *Purifies from self*—lifts us out of ourselves ; purges the baser elements of our nature. *A tone*—a mystic harmony. *The soul and source of music*—It is the accent of this harmony which constitutes the charm and soul of our earthly music. *Eternal harmony—viz.*, the harmony which lies at the root of the universe. *The fabled Cytherea's zone*—The gridle or *cestus* of Venus about which the story is that whoever wore it appeared most charming in the eye of the world.

Sheds a charm.....beauty—**Expl.** Just as the *cestus* of Venus had the magic virtue of conferring beauty on all things, so this eternal harmony of the universe constitutes the soul and charm of all music that we hear.

It would discern.....Death—**Expl.** The music, accents of which we catch in solitary scenes like these, has the power of making even Death abortive.

(**N.B**—The substance of the whole stanza may be thus indicated : It is in scenes of intense solitude like this that we have a sense of the infinite truth and mystery of the universe ; that we catch all that harmony which lies deep down at the core of all Nature.)

St. 91. The Persians wisely reared their altars on the tops of high peaks. No hand built shrine of man could be compared with Earth and Air as realms of worship.

Earth over-gazing mountains—mountains which from their lofty height seem to overlook the earth as it were. *Unwalled temples*—referring to the mountain-peaks which

served as the temples of the ancient Persians. *In whose honour.....hands*—Temples built by the hands of men are powerless to give due honour to God. *Upreared hands*—built by the hands of men—*Columns and Idol-dwellings*—namely, churches and temples.

Goth or Greek—namely Christian or Pagan. (Most of the cathedrals of Europe are built in the Gothic style. *Fond abodes*—mean and foolish houses. *Realms of worship*—houses of worship. *Circumscribe thy prayer*—limit and confine your prayers. ('Do not seek houses built by men where to worship and pray; for these houses with their confined space will cramp and confine your prayers.')

St. 92 The scene undergoes a swift change: a storm begins.

Such a change—such a wonderful change!

A dark eye in woman—Byron, fond of oriental things in many respects, was fond also of 'dark' eye—a perennially oriental characteristic.

As is.....woman—**Expl.** As there is a combinatfon of loveliness and strength (here standing for intensity of passion) in the dark eyes of a beautiful woman, so there is a combination of loveliness and strength in a night storm.

The rattling crags.....thunder—The thunder leaps along from crag to crag and make them rattle with its peal. (The multiplication of echo among the mountain-peaks is referred to here.)

Live thunder—so called because it seems to be endowed with vivid and energetic life as it were.

Not from.....tongue—The thunder issues now not from one cloud only but from the mountains near about; in other words, the mountains all echo the thunder of the cloud. *Her misty shroud*—the canopy of mist which covers her like a shroud. *Who call*—*Alps* is treated as in the plural number.

N. B.—Nothing is more wonderful in Byron in the way of nature-painting than this description of the joyous and exuberant life of the mountains.—The poet was writing from actual experience. The storm to which the passage refers occurred on the 13th June 1816 at midnight.

St. 93. A graphic description of the storm: the poet's intense delight in the tumult of the elements.

Thou.....slumber—you were not intended for sleep. (Mark the boldness of the paradox.)

Thy far delight—the delight of thy long-drawn blast; the delight which pervades the entire extent of the wide curtain of storm. (It would destroy all poetry and illusion to take 'far' as referring to the distance of the storm from the beholder.)

How the lit lake shines—viz. catching the reflection of swift and vivid lightning. *Lit* i.e. lighted up with the image of the lightning.) *A phosphoric sea*—resembling a sea glowing with phosphoresence. *Comes dancing*—an intense joy seems to breathe from all the elements of nature. *'tis black*—all becomes dark again as the lightning dies away. *Its mountain mirth*—its loud, spacious mirth becoming the size of the hills.

As if... ..birth—they laugh as if they had given birth to a young earthquake. (The idea of an earthquake is suggested by the fierce tumult of the elements which seem to shake earth, lake and mountain in one mighty uproar.)

Stanzas 94-95.

These two stanzas have to be taken together—the first stanza giving an elaborare simile not gammatically complete.

The storm has taken its stand where the Rhone cleaves its way between opposing rocks—rocks which are like lovers parted in hate.

The first stanza gives a simile suggested by the valley of the Rhone at Bellegarde near Geneva. The *Rhone* there cuts a swift passage for itself through opposing cliffs—cliffs which almost appear as if they had been joined together once and as if it was the river alone which prevented them from meeting again. This suggests to the poet the image of two lovers once united but now parted by hate.—The simile was most certainly suggested by a passage in Coleridge's *Cristabel.*

Heights—cliffs on opposing sides. *Whose mining deeps broken hearted*—hate which has parted them so thoroughly that it is impossible for them to reunite now. (Mining= undermining.) *So intervene*—part the friends so thoroughly.

N. B. The five remaining lines of the stanza are like the prolongation of the image in a Homeric simile. They have nothing to do with the cliffs on the banks of the Rhone; they deal only with parted lovers.

Thus.....thwarted—made them so angry with one another. *Love.....rage*—But this very hatred which so parted them had its origin in love ; it was love which made them so bitterly angry with each other. *The fond rage.....bloom*—the hatred which poisoned the bloom of their life. *Then departed*—But the active feeling of hatred which once parted them—that in itself has died out. *Itself expired*—The hate has died out but its result survives ; it has made their life miserable through all its years. *All winters*—all of which are bitter and miserable. *War.....wage*—to fight with themselves.

St. 95. Contains a massive and bold personification of the Storm.

The mightiest of storms—As the poet tells us in the next clause, he pictures many different storms as taking part in the revelry of the night, and it is of the strongest of these that he is speaking here. *Fling.....hand*—toss about their thunderbolts from hand to hand : that is the Titanic play in which the storms are engaged. *Of all the band*—i.e., the band of storms. *Hath.....lightnings*—hath flashed his lightnings in zig-zag shape ; hath hurled his lightnings in the valley. *As if he.....hurled*—This storm forked his lightning through the gap as if he understood that it was in the gaps left by desolation that thunderbolts worked best. *Such gaps.....wake!*—gaps produced by the spirit of destruction. *The hot shaft*—the shaft of the thunder bolt. *Should blast*—would wither and destroy. *Whatever.....lurked*—whatever lay hid there.

St. 96. The storm and violence of nature makes the poet watchful and calls up the sleeping feelings of the soul. The storms of the heart are restless and aimless ; is it so also with the storm of Nature ?

A soul—a power and capacity of soul ; referring to his own poetic soul. *To make.....feeling*—which will invest them with charm and grace and which will enable me to feel their influence. *To make these felt*—i.e felt by me.

To make these feeling—able to affect the feelings of people. *Have made me watchful*—have made my soul active and vigilant.

N. B. These sublime features of the landscape together with the possession by me of a soul which invests *them with feeling* and makes *me* able to feel their influence—these are the things which make my soul brisk and receptive to the meaning of nature.

The far roll...voices—the distant roar of the departed storm. *Is the knell...sleepless* – is the signal bell which has called up all my deeper thoughts and feelings. *If I rest!...when* I rest, when I have time for thought. *Where...goal* – Where are you drifting to? *Are ye...breast?*—Are ye aimless and restless like the contending storms of the human heart? *Some high nest!*—where you can rest after all your tumultuous journey.

St. 97. If I could express all my heart and soul in one word—passionate, strong and intense—I would do it. But as it is, words being weak, I must die speechless and unheard.

Embody—give shape and form to. *Unbosom*—unburden my soul. *That...me*—the thoughts which are uppermost in my mind. *Could I wreak...expression*—if I could express all my thoughts in language. *Thus throw*—take with 'into *one* word' in l. 910.

Thus throw ..one word—If I could find *one* word, strong enough, terse enough and vivid enough to express all my thoughts, to express all that I have sought in the past and all that I seek now.

Were lightning—were strong and bright like lightning. *As it is*—since the right word is not to be found. *Unheard*—as unable to express my emotions. *A most voiceless thought*—a thought which is unable to find vent in expression. *Sheathing it as a sword*—keeping it hid in the mind even as a sword is kept hid in its sheath.

St. 98. The storm is followed by a peaceful morning.

Dewy morning—so called not simply because the dew now sparkles upon the grass but because of its soft and tender character. *All incense*—fragrant and balmy. *With cheek and bloom*—blushing and smiling with flowers. *Playful scorn*—humorous mockery. *As if...tomb*—as if there was nothing sad on earth. *Glowing into day*—slowly broadening into daylight. *The marsh...existence*—the course of our life. *We may resume*—The morning seems to assure us that we may renew our thread of life. *And thus*—because morn permits us to live. *May find room for meditation*—in the years of life still to come. *Pass by*—neglect, pass without notice. *May give us pause*—may invite reflection. *If pondered fittingly*—If turned over properly in the mind.

Stanzas 99-104.

Clarence introduces another mention of Rousseau, for he made it the scene of his Nouvelle Heloise.—It will be noticed that, unlike as in the previous case, the poet does not here speak of Rousseau by name; He only deals with that passionate glorification of love which is the theme of Rousseau's wonderful novel.—The burden of the six following stanzas is the same: Clarence is replete with the thoughts of love, it is the home and birthplace of love; sky, air, flowers,trees –all here breathe and speak of love

St. 99 You are the birthplace of love. Rocks, snows, glaciers, trees—all here breathe and speak of love.

Clarence—The village of Clarence, situated near the head of lake Geneva, stands amidst vineyards on sloping ground and commands a most lovely view of the lake and mountain. Rousseau describes the village as well as the scenery around it with passionate eloquence and power in the *Nouvelle Heloise*. —Byron's attitude towards the place may be well indicated by the following passage from his own *notes*.—"The feeling with which all around Clarence is invested is a sense of the *existence* of love in his most sublime capacity."

Thine air ..thought—Love seems to breathe in the air. *Passionate thought*— i. e. thought of love.

Take root in love—i. e grow in love; are based on love. *The snows...caught*—Even the snows of the glaciers, cold as they are, have caught the bloom and colour of love. *Them*— i. e. the snows of the glaciers. *Rays*—i. e. rays of the setting sun. *Sleep there lovingly*—rest gently upon the glaciers. *And sunset.....lovingly*—And at the hour of evening these glaciers are seen touched with marvellous rose-colours by the rays of the sun. *The rocks...love*—even the rocks hard as they are. *Permanent crags*—referring to the hard, unchanging character of the rocks (even the unchanging rocks melt here into love.) *Who sought rocks.. ...*Love has made her home here in order to escape from the troubles and disappointments of the world. *Which.....mocks* ...those troubles which alternately delude the heart with hope and mockery. *Stir and sting*—referring to the alternation of hope and disappointment. Stir with hope, sting with disappointment. *Woos*...flatters, pleases.

St. 100. Same idea continued. Love is here to be found not only on the peaks of mountains or in caves and forests ; it sparkles over the flowers, breathes in the air, and blows through tempests.

By heavenly feet—i.e. of undying love, as the poet explains in the next line. *Who hear.....mountains*—Love enthrones himself here upon the stepping stones of the mountains. Mountains form the ladder over which love climbs to the throne. *Where the God.....light*—The God of love is the pervading life and beauty of all things here. *Is a pervading life*...breathes himself through all things and constitutes their very existence *So shown*—And this pervasive presence of love is shown by the fact that he appears here not only on the tops of mountains *etc.* but also in flowers and the morning breeze. *Over the flowers...sparkling*—It is the eye of love which makes the flowers so gay and bright. *Sparkling*—shining with joy and mirth.

His breath...summer breath—It is the breath of love which makes the summer breeze so fragrant. *Passes*—surpasses. *Desolate hour*—i. e. desolating hour ; hour of destructive fury. *Whose tender...hour*—The power of love, gentle as it is, surpasses the most destructive fury of the tempest.

St. 101 (Same idea.) The torrent, the pines, the vines, the wood—all here are parts of love.

Of him—derive their existence from him ; are part and parcel of him. *The black pines*—referring to the tuft of foliage on the tops of the pines. *Which are.....high*—the dark foliage of the pines is but the shadow of love, *The loud roar ...listeneth*—the torrents which roar loudly to make music for his ears. *The vines.....shores*—the vines which grow on the green, grassy ground that slopes down to the shore of the lake. *Bowed waters*—the waters which bend low in salutation before him. *Where...meet him*—a forced and unnatural image. The waters meet the vines on the shore ; but the poet represents them as meeting love himself in the form of the vines. *The covert....lives*—The contrast is here between the age of the trunks and the youth of leaves. (The trees themselves are old but their foliage is young and fresh ;—and these trees, with their ancient trunks and their young leaves, humbly offer a a home for the resting of love.) *Covert*—lit. that which offers cover ; here simply meaning a thick group. *All hoar*—i. e. white with age. *Stands where it stood*—In other words.

the wood is perennial ; it has existed for ages and has always offered, as it now offers, a home to love. *Populous solitude*'—The idaa is further expanded in the next stanza ; the wood of course is 'solitude' because of the absence of humanity but it is 'populous' with its bird and insect life.

St. 102. (Same idea of the omnipresence of love continued.) The author goes on more specially to describe the populous solitude of the wood.

Fairy form.....things—butterflies and other gaily coloured creatures. *Fairy formed*—light like fairies. *Open their glad wings*—display their gay dress *The gush of springs*—the murmur of fountains. (The contrast is between *gush* in 1. 954 and *fall* in 955. *Gush* is the upward flow while *fall* would be the downward movement of fountains.) *Bud..... beauty*—the flower-blossom which suggests at once an image of beauty. *Extend unto one mighty end*—serves the same purpose, viz. the purpose of showing and glorifying love.

St. 103. (Still continues upon the theme of love.) The author incidentally remarks that it is never the nature of love to remain at standstill ; it either grows or decays.

Would learn that lore—i. e. would learn the lesson of love. *A spirit*—i. e., the home of love purified with the soul of love. *That tender mystery*—viz. the delightful lesson (secret) of love *Love's recess*—the chosen home and shelter of love. *Where.....from those*—**Expl.** Love has taken helter here, driven from human society by the woes of vain men and the arid waste of the world. *Vain men's woes*—the self-created miseries of men. *The world's waste*—i.e , the hostility and inhospitality of men. *From those*—i. e., from the vain men of the world. *It is his nature.....die*—There is no middle course possible for love ; it must either go on advancing or die utterly. (And he flies from human society because the woes of vain men and the waste of the world would check his growth.) *Stands not still*—can not remain stationary. *Grows.....blessing*—develops into a source of happiness and benediction. *Which.....eternity*—Love grows into a blessing which by reason of its eternal duration is fit to compare with the blessing of heaven.

St. 104. Rousseau chose this spot because he felt in his inmost heart that this was the very home and temple of love.

Not for fiction—not simply to serve as a back-ground for story; not simply to serve the purpose of an imaginary romance. *With affections*—i.e., the affection of imaginary beings. *Found*—felt and realised it keenly. *Passion*—i.e., passion of love. *Purified beings*—the pure and innocent beings of the imagination. *It was.....beings*—The pure beings of imagination must enjoy their love in spots like this. *Early love*—first love in the form of Cupid. *Unbound*—in a caress of pure affection. *It was the ground.....unbound*—. **Expl.** The love of Cupid and Psyche, the primal type of love in the world, must have been enacted on this very ground. *Zone*—belt round the waist. *Hallowed.....loveliness*—blessed with beauty. *Deep*—perhaps referring to the enchanted spaces of the valley. (It is one of those words which are infinitely suggestive but to which no precise sense can be attached). *Hath a sound.....sweetness*—is filled through and through with sweetness in all its aspects. (Whatever may be beautiful to sight, touch or sound is to be met with here.) *The Rhone... ..throne*—The Rhone and the Alps have both made their homes here.

Stanzas 105-110.

The poet still lingers on the shores of Lake Geneva; and it is from there that he will bid us farewell. *Lasanne* and *Ferney* remind him respectively of Gibbon and Voltaire, both, in their different ways, enemies of the Christian faith It is certainly remarkable that Byron should have laid emphasis only on this aspect of their character.

Lausanne,—on the north side of Lake Leman; was the residence of Gibbon at the time when he was writing his history of the "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire."

Ferney,—near the town of Geneva; was the home of Voltaire during the latter years of his life. (It may be remared that there was nothing in common between Gibbon and Voltaire except perhaps their latent hostility to the Christian faith. Voltaire was the very spirit of wit, whim and mirth and his manifold genius manifested itself as poet, dramatist, historian, essayist and what not; but, of course, satire was his special weapon. Joined with the irreverence of Voltaire's genius was a strong love of justice and a broad sense of toleration rare in his day.

The peculiar attitude of Gibbon towards Christianity could not be more happily hit off than in Byron's remarkable phrase 'sapping a solemn creed with a solemn sneer'. There is a certain conscious grandiosity of manner in Gibbon's style which shows itself even in his raillery ; and he can never touch upon the subject of Christianity without a half sneer. Gibbon's hostility to Christianity appears specially in Chapter XVI of his work.

St. 105. *Lausanne and Ferney.* They were the abodes of men who sought power by perilous ways ; who sought to emulate the Titanic project of warring against Heaven.

Which...name—which have made you famous. *By dangerous roads*—by perilous paths viz by attacks upon the Christian faith. *Perpetuity of fame*—eternal renown. *They were..... assailed*—They were giants in intellect ; and their object was to wage war against Heaven even as the giants had done. *Steep*—in the unusual sense of *lofty*.

Their object was Titan-like—**Expl.** They warred against Christianity even as the Titans had waged war against Jove ; and as the Titans proceeded to their attack by heaping mountains upon mountains so they proceeded by piling doubts upon doubts. (*Doubts* were the scaffold whereby they hoped to scale high heaven and storm the throne of God.)

On daring doubts...thoughts—They went on piling doubts on the strength of which to attack the Christian faith. *Call down thunder*—provoke the anger of God. *Again assailed*—as once it had been attacked by the Titans. *If heavens..... simile*—Their object was to provoke the anger of God, if indeed God would do more than smile on their weak endeavours. *Man's research*—man's impious research which would throw doubt upon the existence of God.

St. 106. Voltaire's fickle and mercurial nature ; his manifold genius ; ridicule, his special weapon.

The one—Voltaire.

Fire and fickleness—all impetuosity and mercurial flightiness of nature. *A child*—i. e. unstable like a child. *Mutable*—changeful, *As various*—i. e. equally various. *In mind..... various*—If his character was changeful, his genius was equally manifold. *Gay.....wild*—witty or serious, wise or merely whimsical, *He multiplied himself*—he seemed not one but many on account of the versatility of his genius, *The Proteus*—

a sea-god capable of changing forms at will. *His own*—his own special genius or talent. *Breathed.....ridicule*—expressed itself best in satire ; in other words satire was his most potent weapon. *Which.....listed*—which ridicule was directed indiscriminately against all things alike. *Prone*—flat *Laying.....Prone*—destroying all things in its course. *Which as the mind.....listed*—**Expl.** As the wind blows whithersoever it likes, so Voltaire's spirit of raillery directed itself against whatever it liked. *To overthrow a fool*—to overwhelm a fool with ridicule as when he showered irreverent mockery upon Maupertuis.

St 107. Gibbon contrasted with Voltaire. The historian dwelt in meditation and worked with learning but satire gave a keen and biting edge to his style.

Deep and slow—profound and serious. (Contrast with *'fire* and *fickleness'* above.) *Hiving wisdom*—storing up wisdom. (Refers to the long and arduous self-discipline of Gibbon for his work.) *In meditation dwelt*—lived in an atmosphere of deep thought. *With learning wrought*—worked with learning as his weapon. *Shaped.....severe*—gave a keen edge of raillery to his style. *Sapping.....sneer*—seeking to undermine the basis of Christianity with his grave irony. *That master-spell*—that most potent weapon. *Which..... wrath*—which provoked and made them angry.

Which...fear—The wrath which they felt towards him was based upon their fear of his genius. *The Zealot's ready Hell*—that hell which is the fanatic's best weapon of offence. (**N. B.** The fanatic, unable to meet the arguments of his adversary, saves his face by condemning the latter to hell.) *Which...well*= which (viz. Hell) is such a sufficient answer to all doubts.

St. 108. But whatever the nature of their work might have been it is not for us to judge them.

Peace...ashes—let them rest in the grave in peace. *If merited...paid*—If they deserved any punishment, that punishment surely has been meted out to them. *Not ours*—not for weak men. *To judge*—to pronounce either good or bad.

The hour must come—**Expl.** 'After death, either all things will be known to us or all our hopes and dreads will be allayed in long slumber—which slumber again will be broken only on the day of last judgment ; and then i. e. on the day of last

judgment, we may be quite sure that we shall be forgiven or judged with righteousness.

The hour—viz. the hour of death. *Such things*—whether their actions were right or not. *Allayed...slumber*—we shall lose the hopes and dreads which agitated us in life in a long and profound slumber, *Which...decayed*—and the dusty grave in which we are laid will long remain rotting. *And when... revive*—The construction is faulty and ambiguous It evidently refers to the dust but that would yield no sense. The meaning is : 'when we awake from slumber on the last day of judgment.' *Suffer what is just*—be justly punished.

St. 109 The author is preparing to bid us farewell. "Let me quit the work of man" he says "and plunge in contemplation of nature."

Man's works—cities built by the hand of man *To view his makers*—to study Nature which is the immediate handiwork of God. *Suspend this page*—leave writing this book. *Which ...feed*—this book, the inspiration of which I derive from my contemplation.

Until...end—till it seems that the book will never be finished. *To the white Alps tend*—seem to be bending over the peaks of the Alps. *Pierce them*—pierce the cloud i. e., go to the other side of the clouds viz., cross the Alps and enter Italy. *Whatever...permitted*—whatever beauty I may be permitted to behold. *In their...region*—in the region where these clouds mostly grow ; where they have their origin viz., in the Alpine regions. *Where...powers of air*—where the earth draws down the powers of the air towards her and compels them to form clouds. The reference is to the physical fact that clouds and storms are most attracted by mountains. *The earth*—the earth in the shape of mountains swelling out of the earth.

St. 110 (The author gives us a hint of the lands which next he will visit) I shall pierce through the clouds, cross the Alps and then descend upon Italy—which still is the fountain-head of knowledge.

The light of ages—the memory of age-long historical association. *Full flashes...ages*—Crowded memories of the past glance vividly over the mind, as one gazes upon you. *The fierce Carthaginian*—Hannibal. *Since*—since the time when. *Halo*—bright throng or circle. *Halo* (is properly the ring of light which is sometimes observable round the Sun and the Moon.—Here it simply means a radiant circle). *Glorify... pages*—lend grandeur to your history. *Full flashes...pages*—

Expl. There flashes on the mind all thy long and glorious history—from the time of Hannibal's invasion till the day of most recent sages and warriors.

Thou...empires—Empires arose on your plains and then died out from there. (The phrase 'empires' is hardly accurate. But Byron is thinking of the secular sovereignties which have flourished in Italy at some period or other. *First* there was Imperial Rome ; *then* the power of the Venetian oligarchy ; *then* the power of the Italian princes.)

The panting mind—the mind eager and curious for knowledge *Assuages*—quenches. *Quaffing.....fill*—drinking enough to satisfy her thirst. *Rome's imperial hill*—referring to the seven small hills on which Rome was built. *Still, the fount are &c.*—Once you were the home of empires ; and still you are the home of all the arts and sciences.

Stanza 112. I am too old to care much for praise ; and this song perhaps it was intended only to beguile my heart for a while.

Woven into song—strung into a poem *A harmless wile*—an innocent device to beguile the time. *The colouring..... breast*—just suggested by the scenes through which I have been rapidly passing and an impression of which I would like to preserve if only to soothe the heart. *The colouring etc.*—refers to 'they' in the preceding line. 'These verses are the colouring of (i. e. have been suggested by) the scenes etc. *Fleet along*—rush by me. *Which seize*—and an impression of which I would like to preserve. *Fame...youth*—It is the young who care for fame. *As to regard*—as to set any value upon. *Guerden*—reward. (I do not regard man's disfavour as a loss or his favour as any very great reward.) *Stood*—have always stood. *Alone*—unaided and friendless.

Stanza 113. The poet and his attitude towards humanity.

The world—the people of the world. *Have not flattered breath*—have not shouted with the un-washed, garlic-fed multitude ; have not echoed their cries *Its rank breath*—its poisonous, unwholesome (evil-smelling) opinions *Unbowed know*—have not accepted the current fashions and opinions of the world. *Its idolatories*—the cherished opinions of the world. *Coined.....smiles*—wreathed my cheeks in a vain effort to smile. *My cheek*—in apposition to 'heart' understood. 'I have not smiled with the lips, when my heart was in no smiling mood.'

Nor cried.....echo—have not joined in the foolish cries of the mob. *In worship...echo*—repeating a cry which everybody has been uttering. *One of such*—one of the crowd, one of themselves. *Among them but not of them*—surrounded by men and yet not belonging to the species, as it were. *In a shroud etc.*—separated from them by a screen of thoughts which were not theirs. "My own thoughts formed a canopy about me and screened me off from my fellows." *Still could*—i.e. still could have stood alone. *Filed*—defiled. *Which thus.....subdued*—which became weak through sin. ('Even now I could have stood alone but for the sin which has filed my nature.')

Stanza 114 (Mark the concentrated cynicism and bitterness of this stanza.) It is possible that there is a relic of goodness in this world. I have not experienced it myself, but it is possible that it exists.

Let us part etc.—'Let us give the devil his due,' so to say. Byron makes his *amende* to the world; and what a bitter *amende* it is! *Words.....things*—words which are meant to be acted upon; words which are not entirely false. *Virtues ∴ ...merciful*—Most of the so-called virtues of the world are a pretext for cruelty. It is possible however that there are some virtues which are kind. *Nor weave.....failing*—Most virtues are affected in order to compass the ruin of the weak: but it is possible that there are some virtues which are not snares like this. (Evidently, the author is referring to female virtue.) *Snares.....failing*——pitfalls for the weak: virtues which are meant only to deceive. *Are almost.....seem*—are almost sincere. *No name*—not a mere empty name but a substantial reality.

Stanzas 115-118

Farewell verses addressed to his daughter.

Stanza 115. Though I can neither see thee nor hear, yet no one can be more wrapt up in yourself than I. In the far future, you will continue as my only friend while my voice will reach you from the grave.

Thus much—this portion of the poem. *So wrapt up in thee*—so absorbed in loving thought of you. *Thou art...extend*—**N.B.** An obscure and difficult line. The *shadows of far years* will refer to the far future when he himself will be dead. We may take the sentence thus: 'Thou art the only friend with whom I can connect the shadow of the far future. 'You

are the only one whom I can conceive as continuing to be my friend in the far years when I myself shall be dead'. *Albeit*—although. *My brow*—here standing for myself generally. *My voice*—as embodied in these verses. *Albeit my brow... heart*—You have never seen my face; still memories of my voice will blend with the dream of thy future years and call to thy heart. *When mine is cold*—when my heart is cold *i. e.* when I am dead. *A token*—i. e. of my love. *Mould*—grave.

St. 116. Gladly should I have done a parent's share by thee such was not my fate.

The mind's development—the growth of thy intellect. *Thy dawn.....joys*—the growth of little joys in your character. *Thy very growth*—the very growth in your stature as it were. *Catch objects*—come to know of things *Catch knowledge.....then*—know things which hitherto were mysterious to you. *A parent's kiss*—the pure kiss of a father's affection. *Was not reserved*—was not my fate. *Yet this was.....nature*—To show all these marks of affection, of parental care, was within my nature. *As it is*—being debarred from sight and sound of you. *What is there*—what is still in my nature. To have watched over you with a father's affection was within the capacity of my nature. But as it is I do not know what my nature now contains.

St. 117. But in spite of adverse influences I feel that thou must love me.

Though dull hate.....thought—you will be taught (by your mother and guardians) to hate me in the name of duty.

Should...thee—will never be mentioned before you as that of one accursed. *As a spell...dictation*—as a potent source of mischief. *Fraught with*—loaded, charged with. *Desolation*—the power of desolation and mischief. *As a broken claim*—as the name of one who had no longer any claim upon your affection. *Though between us*—though we might be separated by death; though I might die and we should never more meet on earth. *And were the same*—The result would still be the same; you would love me in spite of all adverse influences. *My blood*—my share in your being; my part in your nature. *Were an aim*—would be considered a worthy aim. *An attainment*—a very meritorious achievement. *Were an aim etc.*—*i. e.* to those who are my enemies. (There are people who would consider it a proud achievement if they could blot

out all share of myself in your being.) *All.....vain*—all those attempts to separate us would be fruitless. *That more than life*—that love which is more than life.

St. 118 Born and nurtured like thy father, there will be a better fate for thee than was for him.

Of love—i. e, conceived in love; referring to the love which originally subsisted between Byron and his wife.

Born in bitterness—i. e., in sorrow and trouble; referring to the estrangement which had already come about between Byron and his wife when their daughter was born. *Nurtured in convulsion*—brought up amidst fierce strife and contention; referring to the open rupture between Byron and his wife after the birth of their daughter. *These*—i. e. love, bitterness and convulsion. *These.....elements*—These went to make up the character of thy father also. (As they were the elements of my character, so also they have been the elements of thine.) *As yet*—even now. *Such*—viz. elements of strife and contention. *As yet.....thee*—You still live in an atmosphere of contention and bitterness. *The fire...tempered*—Your lot will be happier and gentlier.

Sweet.....slumbers—May you sleep in peace in your cradle. *Waft*—send floating through the breeze. *Fain would I etc.*—I would gladly send after such a blessing as you might have been to me. (There is a play upon the double meaning of *blessing* here :—I shall send after you a blessing—such a blessing, such a source of happiness, as you might have been to me.)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

ON

Canto III.

1. *What light does the Canto throw on Byron's domestic relations?*

(i) Note *first* Byron's parental affection. The child was but three weeks old when she was parted from her father—though Byron certainly was unaware that this was to be the final parting. Love for children was always a prominent feature in the poet's character; (see St. 54) and is by itself sufficient to refute that charge of cynicism which the poet affected to bring against himself. And this love for children appears in its most tender and exquisite form in the beautiful stanzas with which the canto both opens and closes. In the closing stanzas specially he dwells with strong and pathetic insistence on the belief that his child would be sure to love him, whatever might be the efforts to poison and corrupt the tender affection of her nature and to set her up against himself. (Consult Stanza 1: also stanzas 115-118 and notes thereon.)

(ii) Note *secondly* the purity and tenderness of Byron's affection for his sister. The poet had been treated with rough and cruel injustice by the world. Whatever sentimental moralists may say, the truth seems to be that his wife had left him on insufficient cause; his friends had proved treacherous and inhospitable; and his enemies had raised a hell of obloquy against him. In the total absence not simply of all consideration but also of ordinary justice, he seems to have clung with all the greater tenacity to that one friend who had cleaved loyally to him through good report and evil report and whose love had been the only spring of sweetness in the arid desert of his life—*viz.*, his half sister, Augusta, Mrs. Liegh. He might turn in disgust from the world, he says, but there was one friend in whom was trust and remembrance, and to whom he was bound by stronger ties 'than the church links withal' (Stanzas 53-54.)

(iii) Notice also in this connection, the significant omission of his wife's name. Byron's published references to

his wife (after their separation) seem to be conflicting in tone and temper. At times, he seems to exonerate her from all blame and to regard her as the tool of other and more designing people; but elsewhere his tone is far more bitter and accusing. And it would appear that the latter represented the real and genuine feeling of his heart. *Childe Harold* is one of the sincerest of Byron's utterances; it was written immediately after the parting from his wife; and so the absence of all mention of his wife in the third canto seems to be conclusive on the question.

But there seems to be an oblique reference to his wife in Stanza 117—a reference which is instinct with suppressed bitterness. Speaking of his daughter he says:—"Dull hate will be taught you as your duty and my name will be shut out from you as a spell of desolation." And it seems impossible to doubt that this reference is to Lady Byron. Also when with savage sarcasm the poet says 'there *may* be virtues which are merciful,' is he not thinking of the cold and intolerant prudishness of his wife?

Q. 2. *How does Byron manage his hero in Canto III? What would you say about the identity of the two?*

—There is no question of managing the hero: he seldom appears in the canto: and whenever he does so appear, he has to be dragged in by force.

The first mention of Harold is in stanza 8, where the poet forcibly checks his autobiographical musings and proceeds dutifully to introduce the hero. But then in speaking of the changes in his hero's character, he lapses into autobiography again and gives us glimpses of himself, though still keeping up the pretence of attributing them all to Harold. But this is the most elaborate reference to Harold in the canto (Stanzas 8-16). He appears only in two other places and there also in single lines—as when speaking of the Rhine Byron says. 'There Harold gazes on when a work divine'; or when in moralizing on the castles of the Rhine, he innocently concludes by saying 'Thus Harold inly said and passed along'. Elsewhere it is all 'I, I, I.'

It can be freely said then that in the third canto there is hardly any attempt at concealing the identity between the poet and his hero. The hero merges insensibly in the poet

as soon as he is introduced and thenceforth the poet speaks in his own person throughout. Even apart from the references to his daughter and to Major Howard (which were put in the poet's own mouth) the reference to his sister (in stanzas 53 and 54) would make the case complete for an identification between the poet and his hero.

Q. 3. *What view of his own character does the poet seek to present in this canto ?*

—Here, as elsewhere the poet is true to the pose which he has hit upon for himself. He speaks of himself as one who is sick and weary of life and tired with the vain hopes and vainer disappointments of the world. He has tasted all joys and found pleasure in none (St. 1.); he has grown old in a world of woe and can now be roused no longer by either love, sorrow, hope or ambition (stanza 5); he has brooded so much on his own thoughts that his brain has become at last a whirling gulf of fantasy and flame (stanza 7); he has mixed in society and found that he was unfit for it (st. 12) since he could not coin his cheek in smiles or bend a patient knee before the idols of the world (stanza 113.) And so, sick of man and his work, he was for seeking peace in the hospitable breast of nature.

Q. 4. *What is Byron's attitude towards Nature ?*

—We may premise by saying that the treatment of Nature in this and the next canto is far fuller, deeper and truer than anything to be found in the earlier cantos. Byron's insight into Nature's works has grown keener, his application purer and more genuine; and his power of expression deeper and more eloquent.

Notice in the next place that Nature appears to Byron in a two-fold aspect.

(i) She is his refuge. Sick of the cant and hypocrisy of the world, of man's falsehood and hostility, he seeks shelter in the bosom of material nature, 'The *Ocean* was his home; the *mountains* were his friends; the *desert, forest, cavern, breakers*—these were unto him a companionship and they spoke to him in language clearer than his native speech (stanza 13.)

(ii) But Nature is more than a mere refuge to the poet. She has a beauty, permanence and strength which

never fail in their appeal to him. Thus, on the banks of the exulting and abounding Rhine, the contrast between the frailty of man's perishable work and Nature's permanence strikes home to him, the crystal face of Leman and the blue rushing of the arrowy Rhone soothe his heart with delight and joy; and the mountain-glee of the joyous Alps, the leap of living thunder and the fierce tumult of the tempests, fill his soul with a passionate ecstacy of joy and feeling.

Q. 5. *What is it that struck Byron specially in the beauty of Rhine scenery?*

It is the variegated character of the scenery which specially appealed to Byron in his view of the Rhine-land. These lands, he says, were suited alike to the philosopher ('contemplation,' 1. 565.) and to men in love ('souls united, 1. 564.) Nature is here neither too sombre nor too gay, awful and yet not harsh, wild but not rude, (St. 59.) Mightier and grander scenes the eye might behold; but no place which would disclose such an attractive medley of different kinds of loveliness. (St. 60.)

Q. 6. *Give Byron's estimate of the character of Napoleon —specially of the causes of his downfall.*

Napoleon, says Byron, in a burst of pardonable exaggeration, was the greatest and yet not the worst of men. (Mark the concealed sarcasm in the line.) His spirit was mixed of contraries and fixed, with like firmness, one moment on the mightiest and the next on very trivial subjects. He was extreme in all things; but if he could have followed the golden mean, either he would never have gained his empire or, having gained it, never could have lost.

Coming to the causes of Napoleon's downfall Byron notices specially the following elements

(*i*) Though conqueror of the earth, Napoleon was also the captive of the earth, the fool of fame: and so intoxicated with glory, he became a god unto himself; and that was one cause of his downfall.

(*ii*) He could subdue empires,—but passionate and self-willed, could not control his own pettiest impulses.

(*iii*) Napoleon, in certain respects, wore his heart upon his sleeve : he showed too openly the contempt he felt for the world and thus raised for himself hosts of enemies.

(*iv*) A perpetual restlessness of soul urged him to hurry, made him aspire beyond the fitting medium.

Q. 7. *Sketch after Byron the character of the following persons* ; (*a*) *Rousseau* ; *Voltaire* ; (*c*) *Gibbon.*

[It will be remembered that it was the Lake of Geneva, Lake Leman as Byron calls it, which brought up the memories of all these men. Rousseau had been born at Geneva, near the head of the lake ; and some of the scenery round the lake, notably the scenery about Clarence, has been immortalized by him in the glowing and passionate pages of his romance. *Voltaire* passed the latter days of his life at *Ferney* near the northwest of the Lake, while Gibbon dwelt at *Lausanne*, north of the Lake, when engaged upon his history of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire]

Rousseau. The character of Rousseau has been treated by Byron far more fully and vividly and perhaps with greater sympathy than the two other lives. In a few swift and vivid phrases he touches on all salient points of Rousseau's genius and character ; and the points he notices may be thus indicated.

(i) Rousseau was a self-torturing sophist, given to morbid brooding upon the gloomy thoughts of his own soul. (St. 77.)

(ii) He was unsurpassed as a word-painter, as a weaver of the spell of verbal magic. He could cast a glamour of enchantment upon man's erring passions and could wring overwhelming eloquence even from his own miseries. (St. 77.)

(iii) His love was the very quintessence of that passion—the very flame of what love should be. It kindled and inspired him and, with its excess, blasted him. (St. 78.)

(iv) But the beauty he loved was ideal beauty.—his was no earthly love for earthly woman living or dead. And if he loved any creature of earth it was as the embodiment of his ideal. (St. 79.)

(v) He was morbidly suspicious—and this drove him tnto war with mankind. His suspicious fancies were so strange that he must have been frenzied, mad ; and his madness was that worst form of madness which clothes itself with the show of reason.

(vi) But even as the worst extreme of his madness, words came from him, prophetic like the oracles of Pythia ; and they were of power to set the world on fire and to hurl kingdoms to the dust.

Voltaire. As has been noticed above the poet's treatment of Voltaire is sketchy and slight in comparison with the shrewd and searching analysis of Rousseau. Perhaps Byron was in imperfect sympathy with Voltaire. Voltaire had in him the very essence of true humour, quite apart from his flashing and brilliant wit ; and eloquent sentimentalists like Byron (and we must not forget that Roussean also belonged to the same genus of eloquent sentimentalism) have always a very wholesome dread of humour.—Voltaire, says Byron, was a strange compound of fire and fickleness—fiery enthusiasm and light-hearted frivolity. He was unstable in character, a man of manifold changes of spirit ; but then his genius was equally manifold. He was a Proteus in his talents and was alike *historian*, *philosopher* and *poet* ; but the power in which he most excelled was satire—a satire which he wielded equally powerfully whether in laughing down a fool or in shaking empires.

Gibbon. If Voltare was gay and mercurial, Gibbon was deep and slow, 'hiving wisdom with each studious year.' He lived in an atmosphere of contemplation ; learning was the tool with which he worked ; but that which gave keenest edge to his weapon was his solemn irony. It was this which provoked the wrath of his antagonists ; and they, unable to meet him in argument, doomed him in their bigot zeal, to Hell—this dooming to hell being the most potent weapon which these Zealots possess and is their only answer to all arguments.—One point Byron notices as having been in common between Voltaire and Gibbon : both were enemies of the Christian faith. They were like the ancient Titans, he says ; they piled up doubts upon doubts (even as the Titans, had piled up hills on hills) and so thought to wage war against High Heaven.

Q. 8. *Summarise the poet's remarks upon Clarence*—see notes

Q. 9. *Explain fully the following passages.*

(a) *In that tale...appears*—That tale—viz. the earlier cantos of Childe Harold—is a precious storehouse of past hopes and emotions. Those hopes and emotions are now dead ; and their death has made an arid waste of my life. St. 3.

(b) *I glow...death*—I have no feeling ; but I derive feeling from them i. e., the creations of my fancy. I have no enthusiasm ; but I derive enthusiasm also from them. St. 7

(c) *The spell...seal*— St. 8.

(d) *His had been...perpetual*—In youth, he had drunk up the cup of life too quickly. Then he filled it again from a purer fount and deemed that this spring (this second spring of emotion) would be perpetual. But even this also has failed.—In the first part there is a reference to the poet's dissipated early youth ; and in the second part to his travels in Greece.

(e) *And deemed...behind*— St. 10

(f) *This day...mount*—The poet implies that the body always seeks to drag down the soul. St. 14.

(g) *How in...fleeting too*—The *power which gave* can annul all its gifts in an hour and it can destroy fame also equally quickly.

The reference is to the swift destruction of all Napoleon's hopes and powers in the battle of Waterloo. St. 18.

(h) *Soft eyes...again.* St 21.

(i) *When youth. .feet.* St. 22.

(j) *Cheeks...loveliness*—Cheeks which had been blushing red at whispered praise of their own beauty were now pale and bloodless with fear and anxiety. St. 24.

(k) *The thunder-clouds...shall cover*—The field will be wrapped in a canopy of smoke. When that disperses, the earth will be strewn with the corpses of dead soldiers; and their corpses again will, in

course of time, be covered with another layer of earth. St. 28.

(l) *But life...fruit*—Life will accommodate itself to the dark hue of sorrow. St. 34.

(m) *Did man...three score*—If man measured life by the happiness to be derived from it, would he care to live 70 years ? St. 34.

(n) *Men's thoughts.....throne*—You had to depend upon popularity for your throne ; and so could not afford to be a cynic,

(o) *The part.....den*—you were born to be Alexander and so could not afford to be Diogenes also In other words, a king cannot be a cynic. St. 41.

(p) *He who ascends &c.*—Explain carefully the simile in this stanza.—In the first part, the comparison is between *great men* (who must be solitary at heart) and the *loftiest peaks.* In the second part, the poet figures the great man as one who has climbed the top-most peaks. Such a man has the sun above him and the earth below : but round him are icy peaks. So the great man has glory above and earth below ; but he is surrounded also by hostility and ill will. St, 49

(q) *To seem such.....Lethe etc.*—If it could make me forget my sorrow. it would appear like the pavement of Heaven even now St. 49

(r) *The heart..... Worldings*—We may have grown sick of the treachery and hypocrisy of the world. Yet when we meet kindness, we cannot but respond to it. St. 53

(s) *For this word*—It seemed strange that a man like Harold should love St. 54

(t) *Had not...weapons*—Liberty gives her champions the privilege of chastising her foes : but Marceau had not abused this privilege. St. 57

(u) *And could...here*—If remorse could cease to torture anywhere, it would be here,

(v) *The high.....all things below*—The majesty of worth will survive its woe : the greatness of true merit will survive its temporary difficulties in this world.

And from this immortality it will stare even the sun in the face. St. 67

(w) *First drew.....wretched*—It was here that he was born to that life which to him has been a source of constant misery. St. 77

(x) *In that.....possess't*—He was more happy in the sigh of failure than other people can be in the contentment of possession. St. 79

(y) *What deep wounds.....disfigures it*—Deep wounds, though they heal, leave a scar behind &c. St. 94

(z) *All concentrated..... defence* St. 89

(a[1]) *Thine air.....thought* St. 99.

(b[1]) *That master-spell...well*—Irony made his foes angry —an anger which rose from fear : and it brought upon him the sentence of being doomed to Hell—a sentence which is the fanatic's only reply to all manner of doubts.—Fanatics can never meet the arguments of their adversaries: their only weapon is the threat of damnation. St. 107

(c[1]) *My voice.....cold*—Even when I am dead, my voice will reach out to you from the grave and call to thy heart.—The voice of thy dead father will mingle with thy future dreams and imaginings. St. 115

(d[1]) *Yet...love me*—You will be taught to hate me as part of your duty ; and yet you will love me. St. 117

Q. 10. *Annotate the following passages.*

(a) *The wandering outlaw.....mind* ... Stanza 3

(b) *Soul of my thought* „ 6

(c) *Life's enchanted cup.....brim* ... „ 8

(Life seems happy and bright only in youth)

(d) *Guarded coldness* „ 10

(e) *They speak a mutual language* ... „ 13

(f) *Self-exiled Harold* „ 16

(g) *An empire's dust, an earth-quake's spoil* „ 17

(h) *The patched up idol.....days* ... „ 19

(i) *Death's prophetic ear* „ 23

(j) *Those mutual eyes* „ 24
(k) *Vitility of poison* „ 30
(l) *Conqueror and captive of the earth* ... „ 37
(m) *More or less than man* „ 38
(n) *This makes...contagion* „ 43
(o) *Dark communion* „ 47
(p) *Nor less elate.....date*—These robber-chieftains were as proud and uplifted in heart as heroes of ancient renown.
(q) *Single field* Stanza 49
(r) *Amorous pride* „ 49
(s) *That love...female eyes*—Beside the meaning suggested in the notes, we may *explain the thing thus*: 'Their love had not been divided by enmity; it had even been strengthened by danger—danger which is always dreaded by women. St. 55
(t) *Icy halls.....sublimity* Stanza 62
(u) *His tombless host* „ 63
(v) *Glory's stainless victories* ... „ 64
(w) *The spoil of our infection* ... „ 69
(x) *To love earth for its earthly sake* ... „ 71
(y) *Stem a tide of suffering* „ 75
(z) *Whose dust was all fire* „ 76
(a1) *Suspicion's sanctuary* „ 80
(b1) *Who makes.....infancy* „ 87
(c1) *In solitude.....alone* „ 90
(d1) *The live thunder* „ 92
(e1) *Thy fierce und far delight* ... „ 93
(f1) *Comes.....earth*—pelts joyously down upon the earth.
(g1) *Fire and fickleness* „ 106
(h1) *Sapping.....sneer* „ 107
(i1) *Nor bowed.....knee* „ 113

Pages 17 to 82 Printed by K. C. Das.
M. P. WORKS, 34, MECHUA BAZAR STREET, CALCUTTA.

CANTO IV.

———:o:———

Stanzas 1—5.

The poet has crossed over to Italy and plunges at once into the midst of his subject. Standing on the *Bridge of Sighs* he sees all Venice spread out beneath him and moralizes upon her past glory and her present subjection.

N. B. Two things are worth noticing in connection with this introduction.

1. All pretence at self-concealment has now been dropped. Harold has disappeared or rather he and the poet are one and Byron speaks in his own person.

2. Also there is no proem or introduction. He has no leisure to dally about the fringe of his subject: the charm and glory of Italy has got him in her grip and he goes straight to the heart of the thing.

N B. A brief historical note on the rise and decline of Venetian power may not be out of place.

Even the casual student of Geography knows that Venice stands over a cluster of islands in the midst of a lagoon at the head of the Adriatic; and this peculiar geographical situation is intimately connected with the rise and progress of the Republic. Thus, it was, the isolated and easily defensible situation of Venice that led it to be chosen as an asylum of refuge when Attila and his Huns swept over Northern Italy towards the end of the 5th Century A. D. But, perhaps, it was not till the end of the 6th Century that the place was chosen for purposes of final and definitive settlement.

In the early days of Venice, we find that she was in a position of quasi-dependence upon the state of Padua; but the connection with Padua was soon broken off and in A. D. 697, Venice chose her first Doge and entered upon a long and brilliant career of prosperity. The prestige of the State was further.

strengthened by the failure of Pippin, Charlemagne's father, in his attempts to subdue the republic ; and henceforward her position as a sovereign state was assured. Rapid commercial expansion followed and brought with it a certain amount of territorial expansion also till at the end of the 15th Century she easily ranked as the most considerable power in Northern Italy. But the period of Venice's highest prosperity saw also the beginning of her decline, for which three causes may be assigned. (1) The discovery of the Cape-route to India which deprived Venice of her monopoly of oriental trade. (2) The long series of wars with the growing power of Turkey—wars in which Venice achieved imperishable renown but which left her weak and feeble (3) Jealousy of the other Italian States backed by the Pope.

In May 1797, Venice fell without resistance before Napoleon who next year made her over to Austria. Between 1798 and 1814, Venice changed hands several times between Austria and France, being definitely incorporated with Austria in the latter year ; and it is as the vassal of Austria that Byron sees and laments over her.

Stanza 1. [The towers of Venice rise sudden and sheer from the waves as at the stroke of a magician's rod : and the memory of a thousand years broods upon them]

The bridge of sighs—This was a narrow bridge erected between 1595 and 1605 connecting the Ducal palace with the state prisons which stood on the opposite side of a narrow canal. —Of course the bridge was so called because condemned prisoners were taken across it to be hanged.

A palace—This is the Ducal Palace which, like the church of St. Mark's, was 'a symbol and epitome' of the power which evolved it.—The present magnificent building was commenced sometime near 1300 and was completed in 1462. But, in 1477, a large part of the palace was destroyed and this was again rebuilt between 1480 and 1550. *As from..... hand*—like some creation of magic and as if without the visible labour of human hand or skill. (The palaces of Venice, rising sheer and abrupt from the face of the waters, seemed to the poet like some creation of magic : it almost seemed as if they had risen to the waving of some magician's wand—just as the walls of Troy were fabled to have risen to the music of Apollo.)

A thousand.....around me—**Expl.** Memories of the past throng round me as I gaze upon those distant towers ; and these

memories are lit up with the splendour of the vanished glory of Venice. (The construction is loose and vague and the sentiment is grandiose—not grand.)

A dying glory—the glory that once was of Venice. *Smile..... times*—lends a tinge of grandeur to the ancient history of Venice. *When many a subject land etc.*—Connect with 'far time'—'those distant days when many a foreign land owed homage and alliance to Venice.' **N. B.** The whole passage may be thus explained:

'Dim memories of the past throng round me as I gaze upon Venice, and traces of vanished splendour still light up the ancient days when many a subject land etc.'

Many a subject land—The adjective has to be taken with a grain of caution. The foreign territories of Venice were never very extensive in the modern sense of the word. Still she exercised sovereignty over a goodly slice of Northern Italy, the whole Dalmatian coast, many of the Aegean islands and Crete and Cyprus.—But the supremacy of Venice was more commercial than territorial: and this commercial supremacy which was due to her monopoly over the Asiatic trade received a fatal blow from the discovery of the Cape-route to Asia in 1486.

Looked to—waited upon the pleausure of. *The winged lion etc.*—St. Mark was the patron saint of Venice; at least he became so after 1828, the previous patron having been St. Theodore; and the winged lion of St. Mark was the badge of Venetian power. *The winged.....piles*—It is difficult to say what precisely the poet is referring to. Perhaps he is referring to the palaces and towers of Venice generally.—The Church of St. Mark, for its richness of material and sumptuousness of decoration, is one of the architectural glories of the world: but the reference can hardly be to that. *Where Venice.....state*—where the power and greatness of Venice was physically embodied as it were.

Her hundred isles—The number of islands over which the city extends is a little over 100.

Stanza 2. [With her 'tiara of proud towers', Venice looks like a sea-Cybele. Once, in the past, she was a ruler of the waters, and monarchs were glad to pay homage to her.]

N. B. In the first stanza the poet describes himself as standing on the Bridge of Sighs; but here apparently he is viewing the city from the sea. *Sea cybele*—Cybele—Earth goddess—is

represented as wearing a mural crown—i. e. a crown shaped like a turreted wall. Hence Venice, crowned with her tiara of palaces, is likened to Cybele. But Cybele was *earth*-goddess while Venice was mistress of the seas;—hence sea-Cybele. *Fresh from ocean*—rising pure and stainless from the surface of the waters *At airy distance*—connect with 'rises' in the previous line. 'She rises at airy distance' i. e. she rises there, in front of us, her outlines being broken and softened by the distance from which she is viewed. *She looks.....towers*—construe thus: Rising majestically with her crown of towers, she looks like a sea-cybele, a ruler of the waters etc.

Rising with majestic motion—refers to the physical phenomenon as it appears. As the ship sweeps towards the harbour the city seems slowly and majestically to heave into view. *Such she was*—she *looks* like a ruler of waters; and such she *was* in fact *Her daughters*—the women of Venice generally. *Had their dowers.....nations*—'Subject nations contributed to the marriage portions of Venetian women'; in other words, the fathers and husbands of Venice derived their wealth from conquered nations *The exhaustless East*—the East with all her superabundance of wealth. *The exhaustless.....showers*—All the wealth of the East was poured into the coffers of Venice: referring to the fact that Venice was the chief *entrepot* of the overland trade with Asia. *In purple etc*—she was dressed in the robes of sovereignty. *Of her feast.....increased*—Stripped of metaphor, the passage means monarchs were proud to be counted as the friends of Venice.

Stanza 3 [But the glory of Venice has gone. Yet, though glory has vanished, beauty still is there.]

Tasso—Torquato Tasso, author of *Jerusalem Delivered*, was one of the greatest poets of Italy. *In Venice.....gondolier*—Previous to the year 1797, when Venice lost her independence, the gondoliers of Venice used to be familiarly acquainted with the verses of Tasso and to recite the same as they rowed. *The gondolier*—The gondolas—small, flat-bottomed boats, curving out at the ends and carrying from 4 to 6 passengers ordinarily—are the characteristic conveyances of Italy: and Disraeli happily described them once as the cabs of Venice.

Music meets not etc—In other words, with the loss of independence, gaiety also had fled from the place. *Those days*—viz. her former days of power and prosperity. *But beauty still etc*—viz. the imperishable beauty of nature. *Nature doth not die*

,—her glory doth not fade. *How Venice was ever dear*—viz. dear to all who love Nature, Beauty and Liberty. *The pleasant place*—the home of all happiness and gaiety. *The masque of Italy*—the happiest and merriest place in Italy;—an abode of pleasure and delight.

Stanza 4. [For us moreover she has a charm independent of her historic fame. Shylock, Othello and Pierre, they are the key-stones of the arch which we have raised in memory of Venice.]

Unto us—i. e. for us, English people. *A spell*—a charm, influence. *Beyond her story*—independent of her glory as a historic power. *Unto us...story*—**Expl.** The charm that Venice exercises over us, English people, is not due to her historic fame or to the long line of her mighty rulers; it is due rather to her literary and artistic associations.

Mighty shadows—namely, the great and powerful rulers of ancient Venice. *Whose dim forms.....sway*—In imagination the poet fancies that the shadowy forms of the ancient rulers of Venice hover over the city and mourn her departed greatness. *Despond*—i. e. hover in despair, as contemplating the ruin of their city. *Despond.....sway*—they hover over the city and mourn for the loss of its power. *The dogeless city*—that city which is no longer governed by its native rulers. *Vanished sway*—her former power and glory.

Trophy—The word is used loosely and inaccurately here. Properly, it means 'memorial'; here it has to be taken metaphorically and would refer to the structure of glory which we have raised in honour of Venice. *Ours is a trophy.....Rialto*—The Rialto may have perished; but the structure of glory which we have raised in honour of Venice will not perish so quickly. *Rialto*—properly the central group of the cluster of islands upon which Venice stands; but Byron like Shakespeare is thinking of the 'exchange' of Venice. *Shylock*—'Merchant of Venice.' *Moor*—'Othello.'

Pierre—the hero of Otway's 'Venice Preserved.' *Cannot be swept or worn away*—**Expl.** In other words, our association with Venice is through the imperishable bonds of literature; and these can never be broken. *Arch*—connect with 'trophy' in line 32. *The key-stones of the arch*—i. e. they support that bulwark of glory which we have raised in honour of Venice. *Though all were o'er*—though the city might be destroyed. *For us repeopled.....*

shore—yet 'with the help of imagination' we would be able to repeople the desolate shores of Venice.

Stanza 5—10

A moral digression—weak like all moral digressions and especially weak from Byron's peculiar temperament and genius. Byron was always vague and confused when dealing with historic and moral themes ; and in the moral reflections which follow, there is nothing deep, profound or suggestive ; it is all prosaic and platitudinous. The material grandeur of Venice has vanished ; yet mere creations of the fancy like Othello and Shylock live and help to keep green the memory of Venice in our hearts. This suggests to the poet some cheap reflections on the imperishable character of the beings of the mind

Stanza 5. [The beings created by artistic imaginations are not perishable, rather they impart to our lives a hue of brightness in which it may otherwise be lacking.]

Beings of the mind—creatures of imagination, *Are not of clay*—do not perish quickly. *Essentially immortal*—they are imperishable by their very nature. *They create..... existence*—they make our lives dearer and brighter than they otherwise would be. ll. 40-43 The construction is confused. We may explain thus :—The happiness which fate denies to us in our earthly lives may be supplied by these creatures of fancy *That*—viz. that happiness.

Prohibits to dull life—denies to us in this mortal life of ours *In this.....bondage*—in this earthly and material life of ours *These spirits*—namely, creatures of fancy, beings created by our own imagination. Connect it with 'beings of the mind' in l. 37 *What we hate*—namely that sadness which we dislike, but which is our portion. *Watering the heart etc*—The poet keeps up his former idea. "The beings which we create by our imagination gladden and brighten our lives. They water the sad heart that has suffered from cruel sorrow and disappointment in its early youth *Watering the heart*—imparting an element of tenderness to that heart.

Whose early.....died—which has suffered vexation and disappointment in its early youth

And with a... ..void—they fill up the emptiness which early disappointment may have left in the heart.

N. B. The author is harping upon the services which imagination performs for us 'There are many who have suffered loss and disappointment even in early life, so that their hearts are empty and desolate ; yet the exercise of creative imagination is able to fill the emptiness of such hearts.'

Stanza 6. It is in the work of imaginative creation that both youth and age find relief—youth from the disillusion of hope and age from the weariness of vacancy. Yet, in the world of reality, there may be found more beauty than ever peoples the realm of dreams.

Such is the refuge—**N. B.** The construction is slipshod, just as the meaning is loose and vague.—Grammatically, 'such' would refer to 'these spirits' in line 42 and so to 'beings of the mind' in line 37 ; but that yields no meaning. Consequently we must take 'such' in the sense of 'exercise of the creative imagination.' *Such is the refuge etc*—it is in the exercise of creative fancy that both youth and age find their best consolation. *The first*—viz youth *Vacancy*—weariness and tedium.

The first..... Vacancy—**Expl.** In the exercise of imagination, youth finds refuge from hope and old age finds refuge from tediousness.—(The last we can understand but the first is utterly incomprehensible : one of those unmeaning generalisations in which people sometimes indulge.) *This worn feeling*—What worn feeling ? There is no antecedent to 'this' in the whole of the paragraph and we must supply the antecedent by conjecture. Perhaps the poet is referring to that feeling of disillusionment which one sometimes experiences in youth and that feeling of tedium which one very frequently experiences in age.

And this worn.....eye—**Expl** :—The feelings of disappointment add weariness which people sometimes experience both in youth and age often prompt them to seek rest in the exercise of imagination and thus leads to the production of many books ; and perhaps my own book—this poem of mine—owes its genesis to some such inspiration.

Yet there are things—Hitherto the poet has been glorifying imagination : now he sings another song :—no doubt, imagination is good but there are things in the actual world which outshine in beauty the creatures of imagination. *Our fantastic sky*—the realms of imagination. *In shape and hues etc.*—connect with 'there are things' in line 50. *Constellations*—clusters of beauties. *And the strange constellations etc*—connect with 'outshines' in l. 51. **Expl :**—There are things which outshine the

beauty of fairy land, which outshine those thick clusters of beauty which the fantastic imagination is able to produce.

Stanza 7. Even in my life I have come across such beauties, but they have disappeared like dreams. I might replace them perhaps ; but would that be worth while ?

N. B. In the previous stanza, the poet has said in a general way that there are things in the actual world which surpass in beauty the creatures of imagination. Here he particularizes his general statement and applies it to his own case. *I saw...such*—**Expl.** Even in my own life and experience I have come across persons more beautiful than creatures of imagination or rather, did I dream that I had come across such persons ? (Of course the reference is to the disappointment which the poet met with from his friends and mistresses.)

Such—namely, beings more beautiful than creatures of fancy *Let them go*—I shall not allow my mind to dwell upon such things. *Whatsoever they were*—though they might have been real when they came and stayed. *Are now but so*—are now no better than dreams, because they have disappeared. *I could replace them*—another instance of the poet's proud self-consciousness. 'I could procure new friends and lovers if I wanted to do so.' *Still teems.....form*—my mind is crowded with images of persons.

Such as I sought for—who exactly resemble the persons whom I have lost. *Let these too go*—but I do not care to win or keep them. *Overweening fantasies*—fanciful imagination. *Waking reason.....unsound*—My reason tells me that I ought not to be troubling over such matters. *Other voices.....surround*—other interests demand my attention now. (I care no longer for the loves and friendships of youth nor do I care to replace the friends and mistresses whom I have lost.)

Stanzas 8 9. 10. I have made my home in a strange land and among strange people, yet I love my country passing well and after death my spirit will resume its habitation there. Besides I have twined my hope of immortality with the language of my land.—Perhaps my ambition to be remembered is vain. But I reap where I have sown and I seek the sympathies of none.

I have.....tongue—I have learned other languages, e g the mellifluous Tuscan of Italy. *In strange eyes*—in the eyes of a strange people ; in the estimation of foreigners. *Have stranger*—in other words have been hospitably received by them. *In strange eyes...stranger*—i. e. have found love in the eyes of

foreigners. (There is no question of naturalization here. Byron simply means to say that he has received from foreigners the sympathy and affection that was denied to him even in England. *Which is itself*—i. e. which is master of itself.

No changes—i. e. no change in the attiude of one's friends and fellow countrymen. **N. B.** Byron is thinking of the remarkable change in the public attitude of English people towards himself. *Nor is it harsh to make etc*—The lines can best be explained with reference to the inner working of Byron's mind.—'If one's own friends and fellow-people turn against him, surely he cannot be blamed for making his home elsewhere—either in the midst of other men or even in utter solitude.' *Yet was I born etc.*—**N. B.** Mark how the poet's mind is working back upon itself. 'I have been forced to make my home in a foreign country, nor—considering the treatment that I have received—can I be blamed for doing it. Yet, I was born where people are proud to be born,'—And then, in the next stanza he advances a step further and says: (1) When I die my spirit will resume its habitation in English soil. (2) Also, such hopes of immortality as I may cherish—I rest them mainly upon the English language.

Nor without cause—If people are proud to be born in England, they have cause for their pride. *Should I leave behind etc*—even if I leave England permanently. *Seek me out*—i. e. find out for myself.

Stanza 9. *Perhaps I loved etc*—Even if I leave England permanently etc.—even then it must not be supposed that I did not love England. *Should I lay etc.* i. e. should I die in a foreign land. *Shall resume it*—will resume its habitation in England. *If we may.....sanctuaries*—if our bodiless spirits are permitted to choose a sanctuary for themselves. *My hopes etc*—i. e. my hope of achieving immortality. *In my line*—i e. in the line of English poets. *I twine.....language*—**Expl.** My hopes of achieving immortality are mingled inextricably with the fortunes of the English language—(because I have written only in that language.)

If too fond etc.—**N.B.** Here begins another of those rhetorical passages of which this Canto is full,—Mark the proud self-consciousness of the poet. He has said that he rests his hopes of immortality on his English poems. But this might be considered too vain a hope; and so he proceeds at once to qualify it.—'If my

hopes of immortality are vain, if my literary success is as short-lived as my social success has been, why, let it be so, and let the laurels of poetic fame light on the head of some worthier person.' *Fond*—in the sense of 'foolishly vain.' *These aspirations*—viz. the hope of winning immortality. *If too fond.....in alive*—I have spoken about immortality: but if these hopes of winning immortality be pronounced too vain and presumptuous.

Of hasty growth and blight—i. e. of quick growth and quick decay. (My social success was quickly gained and quickly lost. My literary success was equally quickly gained, and if it should be equally quickly lost, why, then etc.

Stanza 10. *But my name*—shut out my name.

Dull oblivion.....nation—if quick forgetfulness overtake my memory and thus prevents me from being suitably honoured. *Light*—i. e. alight. *Light the laurels etc.*—i. e. let the laurels of poetic fame alight etc. *Spartan's epitaph*—referring to the remark made by the mother of Brasidas, King of Sparta, when people were praising the achievements of her son. *I seek no sympathies*—another instance of Byron's proud self-consciousness. 'It may be that my memory will perish quickly, but I do not want people's compassion on that account.

The thorns which.....I planted—I suffer but from the consequences of my own actions: I have nobody but myself to thank for my misfortunes. (Byron is thinking of the common saying 'men must reap where they have sown,') *They*—referring to 'thorns' above. *They have torn me etc.*—In other words—"I have had to suffer grievously from the consequence of my own folly.' *Shou'd have known*—i. e. ought to have known. *I should have.....sed*—I ought to have known that the consequences of my action would entail bitter sorrow and ought to have taken warning accordingly.

Stanzas 11—19.

The poet resumes his meditations upon the past glory and present decay of Venice.

Stanza 11. The Adriatic mourns the decay of Venice: the lion of St. Mark still stands, but it stands as in mockery of the power which it once symbolized.

The spouseless Adriatic etc.—In the year 1000 A. D., the power of the Dalmatian pirates was crushed and the

Dalmatian coast virtually conquered by the great Doge, Orseolo II ; and the symbolic ceremony of the wedding of the sea (*spozaliffio del mer*) was inaugurated to celebrate this victory and to affirm its significance. Every year, on ascension day, the Doge rode up in the Bucentaur vessel and dropped a ring into the sea.

Annual marriage etc--i.e. as the annual ceremony of the marriage is no longer celebrated. *Neglected garment*—connect with Bucentaur. *Sees his.....stood*—The poet is thinking of the bronze lion (cast in 1183) which surmounts one of the two columns of Egyptian granite which were brought as trophies to Venice by the Doge, Micheli.

Over the proud place—viz. the Piazzetta by the sea which fronts both the Church of St. Mark and the Ducal palace. *Where an emperor sued*—This was the German Emperor, Frederick Barbarossa, had prostrated himself before the Pope in front of the Church of St. Mark. (But the humiliation Frederick Barbarossa was in honour of the Pope and had little to do with the power of Venice.) *St. Mark yet sees etc*—The lion of St Mark still stands—it stands in the Piazzetta before the Church of St. Mark where an Emperor once stood ; but the power which it symbolized is entirely a thing of the past.

Stanza 12. An emperor knelt in homage before the power of Venice while an emperor tramples over her now but such is the usual fortune of national glory and strength.

The suabim—Frederick Barbarossa, so called because he was a descendant of the house of Suabia. *Tramples*—tyrannises. *Kingdoms.....provinces*—Venice which once was an independent kingdom, has now become a mere province of the Austrian Empire. *Sceptered cities*—cities which once exercised the power of sovereignty.

Chains clank.....cities—cities which once were sovereign themselves have now become subject to other kingdoms. *Chains clank*—in other words, they have been fettered themselves. *Melt*—i.e. drop down from the height of power and glory. *When they.....for a while*—after they have enjoyed power and prosperity for some brief while. *Lauwine*—same as avalanche.

Like lauwine...left—**Expl.** Just as the avalanche sweeps down impetuously from the mountain-side when melted by sunshine, so nations also rush speedily into decay. (An avalanche

is melted by sunshine ; and in the case of national power, will Byron go so far as to say that it is the Sunshine of prosperity which weakens it ?

Blind old Dandolo—Enrico Dandolo, who was one of the greatest leaders of Venice, was elected Doge in 1191 when he was more than 80 years of age. *Byzantium's.....foe*—Byzantium or Constantinople was at this time the capital of the Greek Empire and it fell (1204) chiefly owing to the ability of the Venetians under Dandolo ; but it would be a mistake to suppose that the credit of the fall belonged entirely to the Venetians. In fact, the capture of the city was brought about by all the great powers which took part in the 4th crusade

Stanza 13. The four steeds of bronze still glow before the Church of St. Mark, but their power has been bridled and the long history of Venice's freedom has come to a close.

The steeds of brass—These were four horses in bronze, gifts which had been brought from Constantinople by Dandolo and which stand on the portal before the Church of St. Mark.

Doria—Luciano Doria was the Genoese Admiral who sailed into the Adriatic in 1329 and almost succeeded in starving Venice into surrender. The Venetians were prepared to submit almost to any terms but Doria replied ; 'you will have no peace till we have put a rein upon your unbridled horses'. But the tide of war soon turned ; and instead of being able to subdue Venice, Doria himself was blockaded and compelled to surrender a large portion of his fleet in 1330.

But is not.....pass—But though the gilt horses still stand, has not Doria's threat been accomplished in a way? (Doria threatened to bridle the horses; but though he did not succeed in doing so, those horses have now been effectually bridled since Venice has lost her old supremacy.) *Lost and won*—referring to the changes of fortune through which Venice passed, particularly between the years 1798-1814. *Are they not bridled*—has not their power been effectually checked ?

Sinks like a seaweed—which was true both literally and metaphorically. Metaphorically Venice might be said to be sinking like a seaweed because her power was vanishing ; and literally she was sinking because many of her houses were crumbling down. *Whelmed*—i. e., overwhelmed. *Better be whelmed.....foes*—It is better that Venice should be destroyed

by the sea rather than that she should enjoy inglorious repose at the hands of her foreign conquerers. *Even.....depth*—i.e., even at the cost of destruction, even by ceasing to exist. *From whom repose*—who can give her repose no doubt only at the cost of her humility.

Stanza 14. The early history of Venice was glorious ; she was Europe's bulwark against the Ottomite, as witness Candia, Lepanto

A new tyre—The resemblance was in point of the extensive trade of the two cities. Tyre was one of the greatest commercial cities of the ancient world. (The city fell in 1123 during the crusades and her fall was a great impetus to the expansion of Venetian commerce.) *By word*—here, not in the sense of proverbial expression but in the sense of nick-name.

Her very by word.....victory—Byron is thinking of the word *pantaloon* (now meaning buffoon) which was a sort of nickname for Venetians in general, just as Jacques Bonhommie is a nick name for the French peasant. The word pantaloon or pantaleon was a common baptismal name for Venetians and etymologically it means 'planter' of the lion, in other words, 'planter of the Venetian standard.'

Her very by word.....Victory—Even the nickname of a Venetian carries with it a suggestion of former triumphs. *Through fire*—through difficulties and dangers. *Europe's bulwark... ..Ottomite*—Europe's defence against the encroach ments of Turkey.

N. B. But Byron forgets to mention that it was this war with Turkey which ultimately proved the ruin of Venice. She gained a glorious victory over the Turks, but she was unsupported by other European powers and this compelled her to part with her territorial possessions one after another. *Witness Troy's rival*—to be connected with l. 123. Byron calls upon Candia and Lepanto to witness the truth of his description.

Candia—a city on the northern coast of Crete. It was be sieged by the Turks and defended by the Venetians for 24 years. Candia is called Troy's rival because the siege of Troy was an affair lasting ten years. *Lepanto*—The sea-fight of Lepanto took place in 1571 and ended in the defeat of the Turks, chiefly through the bravery of the Venetians though the command of the Christian fleet was under Don John of Austria. *Much it*

testify to the truth of my story. *Can blight*—can consign to oblivion.

Stanza 15. But the sceptre of Venice is broken, and empty halls, desolate streets and foreign faces witness the decay of her former greatness and grandeur.

Statues of glass...dust—**Expl.** Her dead Doges—the whole file of them—have sunk into dust like shattered statues of glass. (A statue of glass is a fragile thing : it is soon shattered into little bits : and so the power of Venice, symbolised by a long succession of Doges, has crumbled to nothingness,) *Where they dwelt*—namely, the ducal palace which like the Church of St. Mark is one of the architectural glories of the world. *The pageant trust*—the pomp and outer splendour of their power.

Their splendid trust—the great power which was committed to their charge as it were. *Their sceptre broken.....stranger*—The power once wielded by Venice has passed into the hands of foreigners. *Foreign aspects*—the faces of the foreign masters of Venice. *Foreign aspects.. .. inthrals*—foreign faces which remind her constantly of her present servitude. *Inthrals*—keeps under subjection. *Have flung. lovely walls*—have cast a shadow of gloom over the beautiful halls of Venice.

Stanza 16—17. When the power of Athens was broken and humiliated at Syracuse, the charm of Athenian poetry gained freedom for her captive sons : so your love of Tasso ought to have preserved you from slavery. The fall of Venice is shameful to the nations, most of all to England

When Athens etc—referring to the unlucky Syracusan expedition which was undertaken at the instigation of the butcher Cleon and placed under the incompetent leadership of Nicias.

Fettered thousands.....war—when thousands of Athenians were enslaved as the result of the war.

Redemption.....muse—Salvation for these fettered thousands came in the shape of Athenian poetry. **N. B.** (The statement is too general. Plutarch only tells us that some Athenian captives procured their freedom by reciting passages from Euripides. It is to be remembered that of the three great Greek tragic poets, Euripides, though little honoured at Athens, was held in high affection by the people of Magna Graecia. i. e., the larger Greek Empire beyond the seas.—A story similar to that touched upon by Byron here forms the prologue of Browning's beautiful poem, "Balaustion's Adventure."

Their only ransom—i. e. the only ransom of these fettered thousands. *Her voice.....after*—These enslaved thousands

could pay no ransom in money ; but the poetry of Athens acted as their ransom and freed them from slavery. *The tragic hymn*—passages from the tragedy of Euripides.

The overmastered victor—the victor who has been completely subdued by the charm of poetry. *His idle scimitar*—The sword which has been rusting uselessly in his belt stirred up of itself as it were. In other words, it rent assunder their chains. *Thank the bard.....strains*—thank the poet and his verse for their freedom.

Stanza 17. *Thus Venice etc.*—The poet applies the story of Plutarch in the case of Venice :—'even if you had no other claim upon the affection and gratitude of the world, even then our love of the great poetry of Tasso ought to have procured freedom for you, just as love of Euripides procured freedom for the Greek prisoners'.

No stronger claim—namely, claim upon the gratitude and reverence of the world. *Thy proud historic deeds*—specially, your great exertions against the power of the Ottomite. *The Bard divine*—referring to Tasso *The choral memory*—the love with which you chanted verses from the work of Tasso. *Should have cut.....tyrants*—should have saved you from your present state of slavery. *Is shameful to the nations*—is a cause of disgrace to the nations. (The nations of Europe ought to be ashamed that they have allowed you to sink into servitude.)

Most of all, Albion—All the nations ought to be ashamed, chiefly, England. Why ? Because, England, a sea power herself, ought to have felt for the decay of another sea power. *The Ocean queen*—i. e. England, on account of her great naval supremacy. *Ocean's children*—namely, maritime states like Venice. *Thy watery wall*—the bulwark of protection for which the sea serves you. *In the fall.....wall*—Do not think that you are invincible ; if Venice fell inspite of her maritime power, then you also may fall.

Stanza 18. Venice was dear to me from boyhood ; and the genius of Otway, Shakespeare etc. rendered her image dearer still.

Fairy city—city of enchantment, of magic beauty and glory. *She to me..... heart*—she possessed a sort of romantic charm for me. *Of joy the sojourn*—to me she appeared as the home of delight. *Of wealth the mart*—the market place of the world's wealth. *Otway*—in his 'Venice Preserved.' *Shakespeare*—in 'Othello' and 'Merchant of Venice'. *Radcliffe*—Mrs. Radcliffe in her novel of 'the Mysteries of Udolpho.'

Stamped.....me—The image of Venice became more deeply engraved upon my heart because of her association with these great materpieces of literature. *Even so*—even in her present condition of abject humiliation. *Found her thus*—i. e. thus humiliated and oppressed. *We did not part*—I did not entirely lose my love for her.

N. B. My first impression of Venice was that it was a seat of wealth, beauty and happiness. No doubt, the real image proved far otherwise ; but even so I did not lose all my old love for her. Nay perhaps, she appealed more strongly to me in her distress and humiliation.

Stanza 19. Even now there is food enough for eye and mind in Venice and some of the happiest hours of my life have been spent here.

I can repeople etc—i. e. repeople the desolate Venice of the present day with recollections of the past. *Of the present..... enough etc*—**Expl.** Even in the Venice of the present day there is food enough for the eye, and spirit ;—food for the eye in the moving and many-coloured flow of her life, food for the mind and spirit in the contrast between her past splendour and present decay. *Meditation chastened down*—a spirit humbled and sobered by gazing upon the swift vicissitudes of human fate.

And more.....sought—(Connect with the previous line. Even now, there is food enough here for the eye and mind—ampler food than I thought I would be able to find *Of the happiest moments.....caught*—Some of the happiest hours of my life have derived their happiness from thee. (The poet pictures life as a piece of many-coloured texture ; and he says that some of the most brightly coloured strands of this texture have derived their brightness from Venice.) *Some feelings*—i. e. some feelings of joy and happiness. *Cannot benumb*—cannot altogether deaden and paralyse. *There are some feelings etc*—There are some feelings of joy which neither time nor misery can efface from the mind. *Mine*—i. e. my heart.

Stanzas 20-24.

Another digression but in a better style than the preceding one. 'There are some feelings', the poet has said, 'which cannot be entirely crushed even by suffering.' And this leads him to muse on suffering and its effect on the mind.

Stanza 20. [The fir tree will grow on the hardest and barrenest soil ; so the human mind may grow and flourish even in the midst of suffering.)

The tannen—Byron speaks of it as a species of Alpine fir ; but it is the German name for fir-trees generally. *Least sheltered*—viz. least protected against the rude buffeting of winds. *Nought below of soil*—nothing in the nature of soil. *Eddying storm*—whirlwinds.

Alpine shocks etc—the rude buffeting of Alpine whirlwinds. (An instance of transferred epithet.) *From their nature etc*—*The* fir-tree, from its very nature, will grow best on hard and barren rocks where there is nothing in the nature of soil from which to draw sap. *Yet*—though there is no soil from which the tree can gather sap. *Springs the trunk*—the stem rises straight and tall.

Mocks—easily withstands ; defies. *Till its height.....came*—The tree grows tall and lusty, till from its height and girth, it seems well worthy of the majestic bosom from which it springs *Bleak*—desolate, barren. *The mind same*—As the fir tree flourishes lustily even from the bosom of bleak and barren rocks so the mind may grow strong and vigorous even in the midst of suffering and misery.

Stanza 21. (The poet continues in the same strain.) Even the brute beasts bear their suffering in silence. Cannot man do the same, seeing that all suffering is temporary ?

Existence may be borne—Life may be endured, i. e. endured even inspite of misery. *The deep root.....bosom*—Life, a life of suffering, may strike its roots deep even in bare and desolate, bosom In other words, life may survive even though the heart is withered and barren.

Bare—i. e. empty of all joy and happiness. *Mute*—silent, uncomplaining. *Dies in silence*—i. e. without whining about its suffering. *Not bestowed.....be*—The example of the wolf and the camel should not be without profit. *Things.....mood*—mean and savage creatures.

Shrink not—i. e. do not flinch from the prospect of suffering *Of nobler clay*—are made of nobler elements than they. *Temper it*—it i. e, our clay. *May temper it to bear*—we may so temper our clay, i. e. introduce such a stiffening element in our composition as to enable it to bear. *It is day*—We may temper our clay. to bear suffering—all the more, when we know that all suffering can be but temporary.

Stanza 22. Suffering kills or is killed : in any case, there is an end to it.—Some perish ; some resume the broken thread of their past life ; while some seek compensation in toil, war, religion.

Doth destroy—kills the sufferer because of its keenness and intensity. *Is destroyed*—viz. is deliberately suppressed by the sufferer. *In each event*—in any case. *With hope..... rebuoyed*—lifted up and inspired with hope. *Replenished*—filled again. *Return.....came*—take up again ; the broken thread of their life.

Weave their web again—once again pursue the even tenour of their life. *Their web*—the complex texture of their existence. *With like intent*—with similar object, i. e. with the object of following life again. *Bowed and bent*—crushed beneath the load of their misery. *Wax gray and ghastly*—grow old beneath the burden of their sorrows.

Withering—fading and decaying. *Ere their time*—prematurely. *The reed*—the feeble support upon which they leant for comfort. (The support upon which they leant for comfort fails them : and they also perish with it.) *Devotion*—religion. *Seek devotion*—turn to religion for comfort and consolation. *Good or evil*—i. e. seek good or evil ; seek to drown their sorrows either in the pursuit of beneficence or in the pursuit of evil.

According.....climb—according as they are fitted by nature to rise high or sink low. **N. B.** If they are formed to rise high, they seek to drown their sorrows in good : otherwise, they seek to forget their misery in a career of crime.

Stanza 23. But the old grief does not wholly perish ; ever and anon it returns to the memory and strikes a responsive chord in the electric chain of consciousness.

N. B. Grief, the poet has said, is temporary : it kills itself or kills the sufferer. But here the poet suggests a doubt—is it ever wholly killed ?

Of griefs subdued—i. e. of griefs which seem to have been subdued. *A token*—a reminder.

Like a scorpion's sting—bitter and painful like a scorpion's sting. *Bit ever and anon.....sting*—**Expl.** Even when we think that our griefs have been finally mastered, ever and anon a bitter pang shoots through the heart and reminds us of their presence. *Scarce seen etc*—The cause of the pain is hardly understood but it is bitter all the same. *Slight withal etc*—**Expl.** The causes

which bring back past sorrows to the mind may be extremely slight—the beauty of springtide, of a summer evening or of a flower or the voice of wind and wave or a casual note of music. *The weight etc*—viz. the burden of past sorrow—a burden which it would like for ever to forget.

Which shall wound.....darkly bound—**Expl.** Slight things —a tone of music, a flower or the voice of wind and wave—may bring back the whole burden of past sorrows to the mind. How? viz. by association of ideas.—They may set vibrating the mystic chain of memories and associations by which we are bound and thus bring back past suffering to the mind. *Darkly*—mysteriously: in an inexplicable way. *The electric chain etc*—viz. that mystic chain of memories and associations by which we are surrounded and which go to make up the complex web of our existence.

Stanza 24. How and why it does so, we do not know; but of the effect we are acutely conscious.

How and why—viz. how and why the old grief recurs to the mind. *Nor can trace.....renewed etc*—**Expl.** We feel the shock of the lightning but cannot trace it to its home in the clouds; in other words, we feel the shock of recurring grief in the mind: but why it resurges from its grave in the past, we cannot tell.

Nor can efface.....behind—(The figure of the lightning is continued.) We cannot trace the lightning to its home; but neither can we wipe out its blighting and blackening effects. In other words, we cannot forget the ravaging pangs of grief.

Which out of things familiar.....bind—Connect with what the poet has said in the last lines of the preceding stanza. There he spoke of slight things as reviving past griefs in the mind; and here he returns to the same idea. **Expl.**—There is some hidden trick of the mind, which, even out of familiar and undesigned things, can call up the spectres of the past even when we think of them the least.

Things familiar—ordinary, every-day sights and sounds, such as note of music, summer's eve, spring etc. *Things undesigned* —things which are neither calculated nor intended to bring up the spectres of the past before the mind. *The spectres*—memory images of friends, relations and lovers dead, lost or estranged. *Spectres.....bind*—spectres which *will* rise to the mind which

cannot be kept back by any necromantic spell—spectres which defy the power of exorcism.

Exorcism—the act of laying ghosts. (There is no ghostly spell or trick, no magic-formula or charm, which can forbid the spectres of the past to intrude from the mind.) *Anew*—connect with 'calls up to view.' *Too many*—viz. too many for our comfort *Yet how few*—viz. for purposes of consolation.

Too many.....few—**Expl.** The spectres which rise to the consciousness are too many and yet too few. They are too many in this that they disturb our rest and trouble our memory, yet too few to bring any real comfort or solace to the mind. (—Images of the past come crowding to the memory : yet perhaps that *one* image is missing which we would give all the rest of the world to see.)

Stanzas 25-29.

The poet calls back his mind deliberately from the strain of moralizing into which it has drifted and once more sets it to the work at hand. "My task", he says, "is to moralize on decay." And then, after a reference to Italy, great even in ruin, he glances off to a description of sunset and even-fall over 'blue Friuli's mountains.'

Stanza 25. Italy, once the mightiest, is still the loveliest of lands—the master-mould from which nature has created all that is free, heroic, brave and beautiful.

My soul wanders—I am losing myself in digressions. **N. B.** This is one of the tricks which Byron frequently employs in order to pass on from one branch of his subject to another. *I demand it back*—I want to focus the whole strength of my mind upon one object viz. to meditate upon the ruins of ancient Italy. *A ruin etc*—'I am a ruin myself'—referring to the wreck and desolation of his life ; 'and I want to stand and meditate among ruins'.

To track...greatness—to trace the course of forgotten greatness ; to go over the sites of vanished splendour. 'Italy', says the poet, 'is strewn with the wrecks of forgotten greatness ; and I wish to go over the whole of this ground. *A land*—i. e. the land of Italy *In.....command*—in its ancient days of power and empire.

Is the loveliest—the contrast is between what *was* and what *is*. Italy *was* the greatest and she *is* even now the loveliest of all lands. *Must ever be*—must always continue to be. *The master-mould etc*—a model and pattern of all excellence; the mould from which Nature has cast all types of beauty, bravery and strength. *Wherein were cast etc*—The metaphor of 'casting as from a mould' is kept up:—'all who are brave, beautiful or heroic have been cast from the mould of Italy'.

Stanza 26. Rome was a republic of kings. When she was great, Italy reflected her grandeur: but even now, Italy is the garden of the world.

The common wealth of kings etc—**N. B.** The construction is slightly mixed up—The Romans formed a Commonwealth of kings.—In other words, Rome was a republic of which the citizens were kings. *And even since etc*—There is a gap in the development of thought. 'Italy *of course* was great when Rome was great but she is lovely even now when Rome was decayed. *Even since*—i. e. even after the decaydence of Rome. *The garden of the world*—one of the loveliest spots on earth. *The home..... yields*—the home of the best artistic treasures of the world. *The home.....decree*—"All that nature can give, all that art can produce—find their home and shelter here.'

Even.....desert—even now when you have been reduced to a desert, when you have been shorn of all your glory. *Thy very weeds etc*—(Weeds are always associated with desolation)—Even the weeds which climb upon your ruins are beautiful. *Thy waste fertility*—(The passage must not be taken literally.) Even in your decay you are greater than other lands in their height of prosperity. *Thy wreck a glory*—you are glorious even in your ruin. *Immaculate*—pure, stainless. *Thy ruin.....defaced*—Even in your ruin there is a charm that cannot be poluted.

Stanza 27. Sun-set and moon-rise at Venice.—In the west the sky is a molten mass of all colours of the rainbow, while in the East, Dian's crescent shows pale and gentle.

Divides the sky—divides the empire of the sky. *A sea of glory*—referring to the molten mass of colours which glows along the western sky at the hour of sunset. *The Alpine height..... mountains*—the summits of the Julian Alps. (An awkward periphrasis.)—This is a chain of mountains rising from behind Trieste and stretching out in a wide semicircle to Verona in

the west.—It is the western section of the range which Byron has in view—though Friuli, from which he has taken the name of the mountain, is to the N. E. of Venice. *A sea.....mountains* —**Expl.** A flood of glorious light is poured along the tops of the Julian Alps and rolls and heaves like a sea of vivid colours.

Of all colours.....west—**Expl** Heaven seems to shine with the glow of all colours—colours that have fused together so as to form a vast rainbow gleaming with iridiscent hues. *Where the day.....west*—where each day dies and becomes merged, as it were, in that eternity of days which forms the past. *Meek Dian's crest*—the gentle crescent of the moon. *Through the azure air*—over the azure sky. *An island of the blest*—serene and peaceful like one of these islands in which the Greeks pictured all noble spirits as living.

Stanza 28—29. Day and night seem contending for mastery till nature asserts her sway and 'all is gray.' The purple glow on Brenta's stream passes through a swift succession of changes like the dolphin swiftly changing its hues at the hour of death.

At her side—i.e at the side of the moon. *But still yon sunny sea etc.*—But though the moon has risen yet the sun seems loth to depart; it still fills the sky with the trail of its departing glory. *Yon sunny sea*—the sea of light that the sun-set has left in its track. *Heaves brightly*—rolls and swells with its mass of colours. *Remains rolled*—seems to float in a mass of liquid colour. *The far Rhætian hill*—referring not so much to Friuli's mountains as to the loftier peaks looming up from beyond.

As day.....were—as if Day and Night were contending for mastery as to who should reign over the sky. *Reclaimed her order*—reasserted her power and gave the victory to night. *Gently flows.....Brenta etc.*—**Paraphrase.** 'Gently flows the Brenta—which is deep-dyed where the colours of the sky instil into her a purple glow as of the rose—a rose that floats upon the stream and is mirrored within it and which, being filled with the face of the heavens, shines radiantly.'—There is some confusion of thought in this passage. The 'rose' that floats upon the stream is caused by the reflection of the colours of the sky; and so there is little point in saying further that it 'glows filled with the face of heaven.'—But the idea in any case is clear. 'The glowing colours of sky are reflected on the bosom of the stream and touch her as with the deep crimson hue of a rose.'

Deep-dyed—dyed a deep, crimson colour. *Where there hues etc.*—connect with 'deep-dyed.' The Brenta is dyed a deep crimson where it has caught the colours of the sky. *Their hues*—the hues of the sky, of sunset and of clouds. *Instil..... rose*—The hues of the sky, being reflected on the sky, touch her with the deep crimson colour as of a fragrant, newborn rose (*Odorous* is an instance of transferred epithet; it is not the purple that is odorous but the rose.) *Streams*—floats. *Glassed*—being mirrored on the clear surface of the water.

Stanza 29. *Which...waters.* **Expl.** Heaven from above pours down its glory upon the waters and fills them with its splendour. *Filled with the face of heaven*—Grammatically it agrees with 'rose.' But so far as sense is concerned, would it not be better to take it with 'stream'?

All its hues—all the colours of the sky. *Their.....diffuse*—spread their enchanting beauty upon the waters. *A paler shadow*—in place of the sea of light spoken of above. *A paler shadow mountains*—The brilliant colours of sun-set gradually fade into hueless gray. *Parting day.....gasps away*—**Expl.** As the dolphin passes through a quick succession of brilliant hues at the hour of its death, so parting day passes through a quick-changing variety of brilliant colours ere it dies.

Each pang—each death-pang. *As it gasps away*—as it approaches death. *The last etc.*—each succeeding wave of colour seeming to be brighter than the preceding one. *All is gray*—In the case of the dolphin it would be the grayness of death while in the case of day, it is grayness of twilight.

Stanzas 30—34.

Passing inland. westward from Venice, the poet comes to Arqua, with its undying memories of Petrarch.

Stanza 30. Arqua contains the tomb of Petrarch; and lovers of song repair thither as the pilgrims of his genius.

Arqua—a village among the Euganean hills, situated a few miles from Padua. Petrarch spent here the latter years of his life and was buried in the village-church. *Laura's lover*—Petrarch was a contemporary of Boccaccio, and next after Dante, these two are regarded as the fathers of Latin Literature. Who Laura was we have little means of knowing; but she seems to have been a lady of Avignon.

Sarcophagus—generally, an empty shell of a tomb. The actual tomb of Petrarch was inside the church, while outside, in the open air, was a sarcophagus standing upon four pillasters. *His well-sung woes*—the lover's woes of which he sang so gracefully in verse. *The pilgrims of his genius*—people who come to pay worship at his shrine. *To raise a language*—to raise the Tuscan dialect to the dignity of a language. (Of course it was Dante who did this chiefly; but both Petrarch and Boccaccio may legitimately claim a share in the glory.)

Reclaim—rescue. *His land reclaim etc.*—connect with 'he arose.'—'He was born (1) to raise a language and (2) to reclaim his land from the oppression of barbaric foes.—The reference is to his passionate odes addressed to Rienzi and the Italian nobles. *Watering the tree.....fame*—a feeble and most artificial line. **Expl.** 'He became famous by watering the laurel ('the tree that bears &c.') with his melodious laments.' In other words, his reputation was fostered by his lamentation over Laura.

Stanza 31. It was in this mountain-village that Petrarch spent the latter days of his life: and the people take pride in showing relics of the poet to strangers.

Keep his dust—preserve his tomb. *Where...years*—where he spent the last years of his life. *His mansion etc.*—the place where Petrarch dwelt and has his tomb. *It is their pride..... praise*—They take pride in showing these things; and let it be counted to their glory that they do so. *More accordant..... strain*—more in harmony with the character of his verse. *A pyramid*—a gorgeous mausoleum.

His monumental fane—his sepulchre. (*Fane* properly means *temple.*) *Such as raise...fane*—**Expl.** These relics, because they are so plain and simple, seem more suitable to his verse than a more pretentious memorial would have been.

Stanza 32. The soft, quiet village is just of the kind that is suited to people who 'have felt their mortality' and who find 'sufficient holiday' in the bright sunshine and by the brawling brook.

N. B. The student will notice that this stanza overflows into the next, just as that in its turn overflows into the next one still.—No doubt this points to growth of the poet's thought in intensity and volume and greater maturity of poetic skill; but at the same time it gives room for slip-shod writing also.

Is one.....complexion—is just of that kind. *Also have... mortality*—who have become conscious of the transitoriness of

mortal things; who have listened to the foot-fall of approaching death *From.....decayed*—from the mire of disappointed hopes. *In the deep.....shade*—There is a tautology involved in the line It means—'in the deep shadow of a hill's shade.'

N. B. Byron's idea can be thus brought out. The village in which Petrarch dwelt is just of the kind which suits people—(1) who have felt their mortality, or (2) who have sought a refuge for disappointed hope in a green hill's shade—hill that shows a distant prospect of cities but can allure no farther; or (3) who find sufficient holiday in a bright sun &c.

Which shows.....further—'A vision of distant cities can be obtained from the hill. But this vision is now displayed in vain for it no longer has any charm or temptation for the man' *The ray of a bright sun*—standing for beauty of nature generally.

Stanza 33. The hours spent in such solitary places may seem idle but are not without their moral,—If society teaches us to live, solitude teaches us to die.

Developing the mountain &c—Connect with 'the ray of a bright sun' in the preceding stanza 'The sunlight brings out into clearer relief and beauty the mountains, leaves etc. and shines on the brawling brook. *Brawling*—babbling; idly chattering as it flows. *Where-by*—by the banks of which. *Sauntering*—lazily flowing. *Calm langour*—gentle indolence.

Whereby.....langour—'The hours spent by the brook-side flow with a sort of lazy indolence and are pure and serene like the current of the brook itself.' *Which*—connect with 'languor.' *Though.....morality*—This sort of lazy indolence may seem entirely unprofitable but is not without its uses.

If.....live—if society teaches us how to mix with our fellow-men. *How to die*—how to fit ourselves for death, how to meet death in a proper spirit. *Hollow*—deceptive, treacherous. *It hath strive*—Expl. Here, in solitude, man can derive no comfort from his own vanity or from the praise of flatterers; here he is face to face with God himself and thus must settle his account with him

Stanza 34. Man here is face to face with God or with those demons which feed upon melancholy bosoms.

N. B. In the preceding stanza Byron has said that in solitude man is face to face with God. Here he qualifies his

assertion and adds 'or with demons'—those demons who make their favourite home in the heart of melancholy persons

With demons—i e. demons of despair. *Who impair..... thoughts*—and fill the mind with evil thoughts and gloomy forebodings. *Melancholy bosoms*—persons of a melancholy disposition. (In the following lines Byron explains what he means. He is thinking of persons.

(1) who are of a gloomy disposition even from their childhood; (2) who love to live in the midst of gloom and melancholy; (5) who think themselves predestined to a life of eternal suffering.) *Moody texture*—gloomy complexion. *Deeming*—thinking. *Predestined.....away*—foredoomed to live a life of eternal misery. *Not of.....away*—not of transitory, shortlived pangs but of eternal misery.

Making the sun etc.—in other words making a very hell of life. (Connect with 'demons' in the first line. It is these demons of despair, says the poet, who make everything frightful and evil to our senses and imagination—so that the sun seems like blood, the earth looks black and gloomy like the tomb, the idea of death is like a nightmare and hell too awful to think of.)

The earth a tomb—To men who have to strive with these demons of despair the earth appears gloomy like the tomb.

The tomb a hell—the tomb seems a place of fearful torment like Hell itself. *Murkier*—darker. *Hell.....gloom*—Hell is dark enough by itself; but to these men of diseased imagination it seems darker still.

Stanza 35—41.

From Arqua Byron passes on to Ferrara, once the seat of the Ducal house of Este and replete with memories of Tasso and Petrarch.

Stanza 35. The grass-grown streets of Ferrara seem like a curse upon the antique brood of Este who were once the petty tyrants of the place.

Ferrara—a city 12 miles south of Padua on the way to Florence. It long remained under the sway of the Este family but was finally annexed to the papal dominions in 1597.

Grass-grown streets—indicating the desolation which had come over the city. *Was not.....solitude*—was not meant for

solitude. The streets are so wide and symmetrical that they must have been meant for a large and busy population.

In thy wide.....sovereigns—Expl. The wide and desolate streets of the city seem like a curse upon the former sovereigns of the state. It seems as if the desolation of the city is a judgment upon the iniquities of her former sovereigns.

The antique brood of Este—Mark the accent of fierce contempt in the expression. 'The ancient house of Este which long held sovereignty in this portion of Lombardy.' *Made good its strength*—maintained and exercised their power.

Was of yore.. ...worn before—The Estes were the sovereigns of Ferrara and they patronised or tyrannised over Tasso and Ariosto just as the mood prompted them to do. *Changing mood*—capricious whim *Petty power*—petty and therefore capricious. *As the changing mood*—The Estes like all petty possessors of arbitrary power were capricious in their favour. Thy acted from no rational motive; and so, in their treatment of Tasso and Ariosto, they were tyrants or patrons just according to the whim of the hour. *Those who were.....before*—those who inherited the poetic fame of Dante, viz. Tasso and Ariosto. *The wreath*—viz the wreath of poetic fame.

N. B. In this and the following stanza Byron accepts the the common tradition that Tasso had fallen hopelessly in love with the princess Leonora D'Este and that as penalty for this he was cruelly put into a mad house by Alfonso II., Duke of Ferrara. But there is nothing in history to support this view Rather, Alfonso, if anything, was exceedingly gentle and forbearing towards the poet; and it was only after repeated provocations that he was sent into the mad-house of St. Anna in 1579. There also his treatment was anything but cruel or harsh. He received spacious apartments and was permitted to see his friends freely and to converse freely with them. The fact rather is that Tasso realy became affected with a grievous mental malady sometime about 1575, and he never shook it off completely in his life. He was released from the mad-house in 1586 but his restlessness did not leave him and he wandered about from city to city dying in 1595 in the convent of St. Onofrio.

Torquato Tasso—(1544-1595)—one of the most brilliant and unfortunate figures in the history of Italian letters. Born of a noble family he early acquired the fame of a poet. In 1571, he

entered the service of Alfonso D'Este, Duke of Ferrara, and shortly after completed his famous work, *Gerusalemme Liberta.*

Stanza 36. Tasso is at once the glory and the shame of the Este family. They herded him with maniacs but could not quench the glory of his mind.

Their glory—because he composed his greatest work while a courtier in their service. *Their shame*—because of their shameful treatment of the poet. But as we have said before, there was nothing particularly shameful in the conduct of the Duke towards Tasso. The poet's conduct exceeded the limits of human patience; nor is there any truth in the story that he fell violently in love with princess Leonora of Este. In fact love had little to do with his malady.

His cell—the mad-house in which he was confined; the asylum of St. Anna. *And then survey etc*—i. e study the contrast between the genius of the poet and the treatment he received. *How dearly.....fame*—what a price he had to pay for his poetic glory.

N. B. The poet implies that imprisonment in a mad house was the price which Tasso had to pay for his glory; perhaps he thinks that the torture of the mad-house inspired his poerry. But there are two things against this pretty theory: (1) Tasso's best poetic work had been accomplished before he went to the mad-house. (2) His imprisonment had nothing to do with his poetry; it was the natural penalty for repeated outbreaks of violence.

Alfonso—Alfonso II. last duke of Ferrara. *The miserable despot*—There is hardly any justification for this title. Alfonso was as much or as little of a tyrant as any of the petty princelings of Italy in his time: but there was nothing very tyrannous in his conduct towards Tasso. *Could not quell etc.*—could not subdue the genius of the poet.

The miserable despot.....plunged it—The wretched tyrant sought to quench the fire of the poet's genius by herding him with the inmates of a mad-house; but he did not succeed in it. *Glory away*—Immortal glory became the portion of the poet and thus removed the indignity which was sought to be thrown upon his name. *The clouds*—the reproach which was sought to be fastened upon him viz the disgrace of being mad

Stanza 37. Endless glory is the portion of Tasso, while Alfonso, Tasso's oppressor, would deservedly sink into oblivion but that his name is connected with the poet.

While thine.....scorn—your name would soon be forgotten but that it is linked up with that of the poet. *Sink*—receptacle. *Would rot etc*—would perish and be forgotten. *Would rot..... nothing*—**Expl.** Your name would perish and you would be gathered into that nameless dust to which all the ancestors of your boasted family have been reduced; in other words, you would be forgotten just as all your ancestors have been forgotten.

But the time.. ...scorn—your connection with Tasso bids us think of you though we think of you with scorn. *How thy ducal pageants...you*—As we think of the contrast between him and you, how mean and wretched you appear! *Thy ducal pageants*—the pomp and pageant which surrounded you. *How...thee*—'how they fall away from you.' *If...born*—if you had been born in a humbler sphere of life. *Him.....mourn*—him over whom you tyrannized i. e. Tasso.

Stanza 38. The poet still harps upon the contrasted fate of the Duke and the poet.

A more splendid trough—from which to feed (*Trough* is a kind of shallow vessel in which cattle are given their feed.) *Wide sty*—a wider stretch of cesspool in which to wallow. **N. B.** You were like the beasts of the field: only you were a beast more splendidly circumstanced than they. *Furrowed*—wrinkled with pain.

He with a glory etc.—**Expl** You were like the beasts of the field; while he—a halo of glory shone round his brow and shines there still, dazzling the eyes of his foes—such foes as the Della Cruscan quire or the French critic, Boileau, who could not bear that others should write more glorious verse than the miserable poetry of his own country.

Emanated then and dazzles now—There is hardly any contrast between 'emanated' and 'dazzles' though a contrast seems to be intended—'The glory which then (i. e. in his own day) issued from the poetry of Tasso now fairly dazzles i. e. shines with exceeding splendonr.'

The Cruscan quire—Byron seems to think (and Mr. Tozer says in his note) that it was the Academy della Crusca of Florence which condemned the work of Tasso. But it seems rather that it was only *two members* of the Academy who published a pamphlet bitterly condemning his style. (This was in 1585.)

Boileau etc.—This was the great French poet and critic who laid down the law in all literary matters in the early part of the 18th century and whose influence, through Pope and Johnson, was not without considerable effect upon the development of English Literature.—In his 9th satire, Boileau speaks of the 'clinking' of Tasso's verse—a remark which, as Byron justly retorts, would more apply to the mechanical jingle of French poetry.

Could allow—could afford to praise. *Could allow no strain*—could not afford to praise any poetry. *Shamed*—i. e. put to shame. *His country's creaking lyre*—the harsh, mechanical music of French poetry. *That whetstone teeth*—a music which sets the teeth on edge.

Monotony in wire—referring to the metallic gingling of French poetry.

Sanza 39. In life Tasso was the mark of many injuries but was not vanquished by them. Of poets there is no end ; but many of them combined would not produce one Tasso.

Peace.....shade—Let the shade of the injured poet rest in peace. (*Injured shade* is an instance of transferred epithet.)

'Twas his.....miss—Expl. In life he was the object of injury and oppression ; and after death his memory has been the mark of cruel slander. But he was vanquished by neither :—wrong aimed her cruellest arrows at him but missed

Victor.....song—poet unequalled in modern times. *Brings millions*—produces millions of human beings

How long.....think—New generations may go on from year to year ; and yet the whole of them combined will not be able to produce one poet like Tasso

Though all in one.....Sun—'Though the rays of many stars were focussed into one yet they would not equal the brightness of the Sun.' In other words, the combined intellect of many generations of human beings would not produce one poet like Tasso.

Stanza 40. Great as Tasso was, he was equalled by two others—Dante and Ariosto.

N. B. Ariosto no doubt was great—greater even as a man than as a poet ; but to bracket him with Dante argues a lapse from Byron's habitual sanity of literary criticism.

The Bard of Hell—Dante, a Florentine of Florentines and the greatest poet of Italy. *Inferno* or *Hell* is the first part of his Divine Comedy and hence he is called here the bard of hell.

The bard of chivalry—Ariosto so called because his great work, Orlando Furioso, is a romance of chivalry. *The Tuscan father*—Dante, so called because he was the founder of the modern Italian Literature. *Not unequal*—equal to Dante. *The southern Scott*—Byron repeats this compliment by inversion two lines below and repeated it again when dedicating *Cain* to Sir Walter.

The southern Scott—The Sir Walter of Italy—so called for Ariosto wrote of knights, squires and dames just as Scott did.

The ministrel etc—the poet who created a new species of poetry—the poetry of romance and chivalry—by the power of his genius.

Romance—the high and heroic adventures in which knights engaged

Stanza 41. The laurel which crowned Ariosto's bust was rent by lightning, but the laurel wreath of glory can never fade from his brow.

The lightning rent etc—This refers to an actual fact. 'Before the remains were transferred from the Benedictine church to the library of Ferrara, his bust was struck by lightning ; and a crown of iron laurels which surmounted it melted away.'

Laurel's mimicked leaves—leaves imitating the laurel.

Nor was the ominous element etc—**Expl.** The true wreath of glory that crowns a poet's brow can never fade ; and a false and mimic crown can only disgrace it. Hence it was but just that the lightning should destroy this false crown.

The ominous element—the lightning whose stroke seemed so ominous. *The true laurel wreath.....cleaves*—No earthly thunder can rend in two the poet's true crown of glory. *Fondly*—foolishly. *If fondly superstitious etc*—if there are superstitious people who are disposed to attach any significance to this portent.

That the lightning etc—This was the old Roman idea. (So Byron answers superstition by superstition)—If superstitious people think it ominous that the laurel wreath on Ariosto's brow should be struck by lightning, let them remember that lightning

is also said to sanctify whatever it touches. So the bust of the poet is doubly sacred now.

Stanzas 42 to 47.

Before passing on to Florence and Rome the poet pauses and muses generally on the beauty and decadence of Italy—beauty and decadence which seem to be closely connected.

Stanza 42. Italy has the fatal gift of beauty—gift which to her has been a dowery of endless misfortunes. Would that she had been less lovely but more powerful !

N. B. As Byron himself tells us, this and the following stanza are a free translation of Filicaja's sonnet to Italy.

Fatal gift—so called because it has been most unfortunate to her ; it made her the prey of successive hordes of invaders. (In the original it is 'unfortnnate gift' *'dono infelice.'*)

Which became etc—a gift of beauty which has been like a dowery of endless woes. (*Funeral* in the sense of 'funereal,' 'most melancholy.)

On thy sweet brow etc—Your record has been a record of sorrow and disgrace. 'Sorrow has been graved on your brow by shame and your annals are written in characters of terrible misery.'

Graved—engraved, impressed. *Characters of flame*—letters of fire. *In thy nakedness*—in your present desolation and decay. *Couldst claim the right*—couldst assert your legitimate position in the world.

Awe.....back—frighten back those oppressors who hasten to prey upon your weakness. (At the time when Byron was writing a large portion of Italy was under the sway of Austria while only a little while back it was under the dominion of Napoleon.)

Who press—who hasten forward. *To drink the tears etc*—to make themselves rich at your expense : to profit by your weakness and misery.

Stanza 43 Then she could have better frightened her foes or in any case would have been less desired by them.

Then mightest thou etc—These two lines have to be taken with "less lovely" or "more powerful" in the preceding stanza ; and the whole is arranged in figure *chiasmus*. 'If you had been less lovely you would have been less desired and if you had been more powerful you might have appalled them more.'

More appal—i.e. frighten them more. *Or—i.e.* if you had been less lovely. *Less desired*—less coveted being less lovely. *Be homely...peaceful*—You might have been homely (*i.e.* plain and unadorned) but then you would have been able to spend your days in peace.

Then still untired.....friend or foe—**Expl.** If you had been less lovely or more powerful, then these things would not have happened: (1) armed hordes would not have poured down the steep Alps and thus would have been still untired; (2) motley invading armies from many nations would not have come up over the Po; and (3) you would not have been obliged to depend on the stranger's sword for your defence and so would not have been obliged to be the slave of everybody.

N. B. Byron is not thinking of any specific invasion but of all those invasions which have burst over Italy—beginning from the time of the Gaulic Wars, passing through the ravages of the Huns and Goths, and coming down to the times of Napoleon. *Deep*—steep, precipitous. *Still untired*—proleptic adjective. The armed hordes would not have poured down the Alps and so would be still untired. *Many-nation'd spoiler*—thinking of the motley crew which came in the train of Alaric and Attila.

Quaff—drink in large draughts. *Blood and water*—so called because the water would be dyed with the blood of the slain. The waters of the Po would not be stained with the blood of the slain and so the victorious hordes would not have to drink blood and water. *Sad weapon*—so called because it is a mark of disgrace.

Victor or vanquished &c—At present you are slaves even when victorious for your victories are won by the stranger. 'When vanquished you are the slaves of your foes; and when victorious you are the slaves of your friends.'

Stanza 44. Wandering through Greece in my youth. I followed the path which had been traced in his day by Servius Sulpicius, friend of Cicero; and I saw those ruins which he also had seen.

Wandering in youth—Byron is referring to his travels in Greece in the year 1810. *I traced the path*—I followed the path which had been followed before me by &c.

The Roman friend—This was Servius Sulpicius, friend of Cicero—'Rome's least-mortal mind.' The letter to which Byron will shortly be referring is included in Cicero's *Epistles* and was

written in 46 B. C. Cicero had lost his daughter Julia ; and Sulpicius seeks to console him by moralizing on the decay of mighty states and principalities.

Rome's least-mortal mind—the one man of Rome who was least like a man by reason of his God-like might of intellect.—Surely, this is exaggerated praise for a man like Cicero, who, at the best was a mellifluous rhetorician and is quite dwarfed by the other great figures of the time.

With a fanning wind—fanned by a gentle breeze. *Did skim*—passed lightly over the smooth sea.

Came megara—This is the order in which the places would appear to a man returning from the Asiatic coast and sailing towards the head of the Saronic gulf—the gulf to the east of the Isthmus of Corinth.

Came Megara &c—Byron is giving us a paraphrase of the letter of Sulpicius. His paraphrase is good but there is nothing to equal the terse vigour of the Latin original : *'post me Aegina, ante Megara, dextra Piraeus, sinistra Corinthus.*

Megara—was of importance in the days of the tyrants. Her grandeur was therefore of an earlier date even than that of Athens or Corinth. *Piraeus*—here standing for the power of Athens. Piraeus was the fortified harbour of Athens. *The prow*—the carved front part of a ship or boat. *Saw ..unite*—saw the ruins of all these mighty states coming into view at the same time.

Even as he had seen &c.—I saw those ruins just as Sulpicius had seen them, for Time had not restored them but had defaced them rather.

Stanza 45. Time had not repaired those ruins when I saw them but rather had defaced them by barbaric upgrowths.

Barbaric dwellings—the rude dwellings of the Moslem conquerors.

Which only...vanished might—The barbaric dwellings which have risen up on the sites of these ruined cities only make us lament the more the few sad relics which still survive of their former splendour.

More endeared—more precious and beloved. *The few last rays...light*—the rays which still survive of a light that has been

all but quenched ; in other words the few surviving relics of their vanished splendour.

The vanished relics &c—the few and battered remains of the grandeur which these states once possessed. *Sepulchres of cities*—graves where cities and states lay buried. *His yet.. page*—his book or letter which still survives.

The moral lesson &c—shows the lesson that is to be drawn from a contemplation of those ruins. 'When states fall and empires decay, why should we be unnerved by the loss of individual human beings' ? Such seems to be the lesson drawn by Sulpicius.

Stanza 46. The page in which Sulpicius drew his moral lesson is now before me ; but to the record of human ruins viewed by him must now be added the ruin of his own land too.

That page—the page where Sulpicius catalogued his table of cities in ruins. *On mine*—on the page where I write. *His country's ruin &c*—i.e. the ruin of Rome.

N.B. 'He gives a table of ruined cities in his page and now the ruin of his own city has to be added to the list ; and to complete the record of ruins, I myself who write am in desolation.'

All that was &c—All that was in ruins then still remains in the same condition. The ruins then existing have none of them been repaired, nay they have been further defaced.

Bows...storm—bows before the blast of misfortune, succumbs to the common fate. *In the same...blackness*—and is overwhelmed in similar ruin and oblivion. *The skeleton...form*—the giant remains of her former vastness.

Wrecks of another world—she is huge even in her ruin like the skeleton of some pre-historic monster. *Whose ashes...warm*—with something of the warmth of life even in her ruins.

Stanza 47. Yet there is one consoling thought. If Italy was once the mother of arms she is still the mother of arts and the parent of our religion.

Though every other land...side—The story of your wrongs and injuries should echo from side to side of the world, and it shall do so yet. (Mark the contrast between *should* and *shall*.')

Mother.....arms—once you were supreme in arms ; now, you are equally supreme in arts. *Then*—i.e. in the ancient days of your military supremacy.

Thy hand...guide—you protected us once (with your strength); you lead us still (with your artistic genius-)

Parent of our religion—Besides you are the mother of our religion. (N.B. The reference is to the fact that Roman Catholic Christianity has its chief seat and throne in Italy; and that it was from Italy that missionaries went out in ancient time to convert the world.)

Whom the wide...heaven—The nations of the world have knelt before you in order to obtain passport to heaven i.e. in order to learn the secrets of true religion. (It is the claim of Catholic Christianity that the Pope is the apostolic successor of St. Peter; and legend credits St. Peter with holding the key of Heaven.)

Her parricide—viz. in having ruined you. (*Parricide* i. e. 'parent slaughter.')

Shall redeem thee—must save you from slavery. (This prophecy has been partially fulfilled and Italy has been redeemed—not by repentant Europe but by the valour of her own sons, partly aided by the French.)

All backward.....tide—Europe will redeem and drive back the tide of Barbarian invasion that now overwhelms you. *Sue*—pray, petition.

Stanzas 48 to 53.

The poet reaches Florence and there meditates upon the statue of the Medicean Venus.

Stanza 48. Florence, surrounderd by her amphitheatre of hills, inspires gentle thoughts in the mind.

Arno—the river on which Florence stands. *Wins*—invites, stands. *The Etrurian Athens*—Florence is so called because it was the home of arts and learning in Italy just as Athens was in Greece. (Dante, Petrarch and Boccacio, the fathers of Italian Literature, were all Florentines; and so also were Raphael and Michael Angelo, the greatest names in painting and sculpture respectively.—Besides, it was in Florence that the new culture of the Renaissance chiefly took root.)

Claims and keeps—demands and retains. *Softer feeling*—a gentle feeling of affection for the beautiful architecture of her

houses and churches. There is no comparison intended in 'softer.' *Girt*—surrounded, *Girt.....hills*—Florence is closed in by spurs of the Appenines.

Reaps her corn etc.—The valley in which Florence stands is extremely fertile ; and *wheat, Indian corn, vines* and *olive* adorn both the plain and the surrounding hills. *Redundant*—overflowing. *Horn—Plenty* in Greek sculpture is represented as holding a horn (*cornutos*) in her hands. *Plenty.....horn*—overflowing abundance smiles over all the land.

Along the banks. born—Modern commerce, with the overflowing wealth that it brings, was born here. (The principal noble families of Florence such as the Medici, Uffizzi, and Albizzi all rose to greatness through commerce.)

Buried learning—learning which had been almost forgotten during the Middle ages.

Redeemed...morn –rescued so as to find a new day. (The revival of learning in Modern Europe is commonly dated as beginning from 1453. Constantinople fell in that year and the Greek scholars of Constantinople fled for refuge to the cities of northern Italy. The result was a great revival of interest in Greek literature and Philosophy and hence a quickening and development of intellectual curiosity generally.)

Stanza 49. The beautiful statue of the Medicean Venus : it is a supreme example of artistic triumph.

The goddess—Venus, the goddess of Love. (Byron speaks of her as '*the* goddess' as if Love were the only thing that counted)

Loves in stone—the statue breathes the very spirit of love.

There too.....stone—referring to the statue of Venus, called the Venus de Medici, which is to be found in the Uffizzi gallery of Florence. This statue was found in the portico of Octavius at Rome and is attributed (perhaps wrongly) to Cleomenes.

Fills.....beauty—diffuses an atmosphere of beauty around her *We inhale... ...aspect*—As we gaze on the statue, we seem to drink in the heavenly beauty of her face. *We inhale*—we seem to breathe in through every pore of our body. *The ambrosial aspect*—the beauty of its heavenly countenance.

Instils.....immortality—transmits a portion of its own immortality to us. *The veil.....undrawn*—Heaven itself seems to be disclosed before us as we gaze upon this statue. *Within*

the pale we stand—As we gaze upon the statue we seem to stand within the very precincts of Heaven. *Mind*—the genius of the artist. *What mind.....fail*—how the genius of men can surpass even the works of nature. (The statue tells us how the genius of the artist can mould a face and form which nature herself cannot equal.)

To the fond...mould—**Expl.** We envy the idol-worshippers of old that stroke of divine genius which could produce such a work of art as this. (The production of such a statue is impossible now; it could be produced only when Venus was actually worshipped as a goddess. And though we may despise those ancient people as idol-worshippers we cannot but envy the genius they possessed.)

The innate flash—that supreme touch of genius. *Such a soul*—such a speaking and animated statue.

Stanza 50. No jargon of art-criticism is needed to appraise this divine work of art. We have heart, blood and eyes and these are enough to feel the supreme charm of the figure.

Know not where—know not whither to turn, we are so overwhelmed by the beauty of the image.

Dazzled and drunk—overwhelmed and intoxicated. *Reels... fulness*—staggers under its weight of delight as it were. *Chained to.....art*—captives imprisoned by our own ecstatic admiration of supreme artistic skill.

Would not—do not wish to. (We are captives of their art: and do not wish to escape from our captivity.) *Away*—Let us put an end to all this toying with words. *Terms precise*—the technical jargon of art criticism.

The paltry jargon.....mart—the technical patter which passes current in the sale-room of statuary. *Pedantry*—affectation of learning. *Gulls*—deceives.

Where pedantry etc.—Byron means to imply that it is only fools who are taken in by this critical patter. *We have eyes*—and therefore can see and appreciate beauty. *Blood, pulse..... prize*—We have natural feelings, affections and passions and all these confirm the judgment of Paris.

Confirm...prize—tell us that Venus is supreme. (The Dardan shephard was Paris, son of Priam, who spent the early years of his life as a shepherd on Mt. Ida. Asked to decide

between Venus, Juno and Minerva, Paris adjudged the palm of beauty to Venus.)

Stanza 51. Didst thou, wonderful Goddess, appear in all this glory of loveliness to Paris, Anchises or Mars?

Of the three names mentioned in this stanza, Paris judged between Venus, Juno and Minerva, Anchises was loved by Venus while Mars also was one of her lovers.

More deeply blest—more perfectly happy, so called because Anchises was loved by the goddess and had a son by her. *In all.....Goddess ship*—in the full glory of your divine beauty. *Thy own*—referring to the complete mastery of Venus over Mars.

Vanquished.....war—Mars, who, god of war as he might be, was vanquished by your charms. (Mark the transition from past to present in this line. Of course, strict grammar would still require the past tense here; but the poet seems to see before him the god of war as he lay languid with love, with the hot kisses of Venus raining upon him,)

Feeding.....cheek—It is the eyes of Mars which feed upon her cheek devouring its beauty as it were.

While thy lips etc.—He gazes upon your cheeks while your kisses, melting like hot lava, pour upon his eyelids etc.

As from an urn—they are poured from your lips as water from an urn.

Stanza 52 There are moments of ecstatic love when men are like gods. No doubt our mortality returns to us. But we can remember the vision of our moments of divinity and can recreate from them images of beauty like this statue.

Glowing and circumfused—**N.B.** The sense in which I take this passage is wholly different from that of Mr. Tozer. Mr. Tozer takes it like this: The gods, *because of their divinity*, are unable fully to express their love and hence assume a mortal form.' This seems to me pointless; why should their divinity disable the gods? Rather, the converse might be the case.—Hence I interpret the passage thus:—'At times, *even the divinity of the gods* is unable to express the full strength of their love; and so glowing and circumfused in love, they appear weak and powerless like mortals' This interpretation seems all the more reasonable in view of what follows. 'At times the gods are like me; and there are moments of supreme love and happiness when men are like unto Gods'.

Glowing—i. e. 'radiant with love.'

Circumfused in love—i e. steeped in the very atmosphere of love ; bathed in a flood of love as it were.

Glowing love—radiant with love and yet struck dumb with the very ecstacy of their happiness. (This also supports the explanation I have given above.)

Their full divinity etc. i. e *even* their full divinity being unable etc. **Expl.** The ecstacy of their love is so great that even their full divinity is unable to express it. *Become as mortals* —become weak and helpless like men themselves.

Man's fate.....brightest—This is the converse side of the case. 'If gods under the influence of love become like men, then men, under the same influence, become like unto gods'. *Man's fate.....brightest*—Even in man's humble life there are some moments—moments of rapture—which are equal to the brightest hours in the lives of gods.

The weight of earth.....us—we are weighed down by a sense of our mortality ; we are oppressed by a consciousness of our earthliness. (**N. B.** The poet develops his former idea. We have some moments in our life, he has said, which are like the brightest moments of the gods And now he says : But these bright moments are few ; they are soon lost beneath the weight of the earth.)

Let it go—But it is useless lamenting or dwelling upon that fact. (No doubt our god-like moments are few, but it is useless etc.

We can recall etc. **Expl** "The god-like moments of our life soon vanish ; but we can remember the visions of beauty which visited us in these moments and from such memory can recreate shapes of immortal beauty like this—viz. this statue of Venus.

Such visions—viz. the visions of beauty which visit us in our moments of god-like ecstacy and love.

From what has been—from visions which we actually have.

Or might be—i.e. visions which are only ideal—which have never visited us but which we can dream about.

Create...things etc.—From our memory-images, from the ideal beings of our fancy, we can create shapes like that of this statue.

Things.....gods below—god-like images of beauty like this statue.

Stanza 53. Let the artist and the connoisseur bother themselves about the details of beauty in this divine work of art. I shall not allow one breath of their jargon to ruffle my mind.

Learned fingers—i. e people who affect to be wise in matters of art.

His ape—viz. the art-critic. (Mark the accent of bitter contempt in this line.)

His connoissiership—an expression like 'his Lordship.' It means 'he the connoissieur'.

The voluptuous swell—the grand curve of the bosoms.

I leave.....swell—I do not bother myself about the details of artistic workmanship: I allow professional artists and professional art critics to dwell upon these matters.

Let these.....undescribable:—Critics worry themselves in a vain attempt to bring out the beauty of this divine work of art. But such attempts are bound to fail, the secret of this beauty must always escape our notice.

I would not...dwell—**Expl.** 'I wish simply to enjoy the beauty of this work of art and I do not care to analyse the elements of such beauty —The image of this beautiful statue will remain mirrored upon the stream of my mind; and I do not wish the surface of that stream to be ruffled by the least breath of criticism.'

I would not—I do not wish. *Their vile breath*—the breath of stupid and base criticism. *Crisp*—i. e. curl, ruffled. *The stream*—i. e. the stream of my consciousness. *That image*—viz. the image of that statue.

The unruffled mirror—agreeing with 'the stream' in l. 474—The poet means that his memory will be a mirror in which the image of the statue will dwell for ever—a mirror the surface of which will be disturbed by no breath of criticism.

Loveliest dream—referring to the statue of the Medicean Venus. *That ever.....beam*—which ever came down from heaven in order to shine upon the soul of man.

Stanza 54. The immortal dead who are buried in the church of Santa Croce—Michel Angelo, Alfieri, Galileo, Machiavelli,

Ashes—the relics of the departed great. *Ashes.....holier year*—The church is holy in itself; but the people who are buried there make it holier still. (The church of Santa Croce is the Westminster Abbey of Florence).

Dust.....chaos—**N. B.** My interpretation of this passage differs wholly from that of Mr. Tozer. According to him, the idea is something like this:—'If nothing else existed except the dust of these people, even then something immortal would remain.'

But I take the passage in the following way:—'If Florence had nothing else excepting her past and the dust of these great men, then this dust itself would be enough to make her immortal.'

Dust.....immortal—dust which by itself is sufficient to confer immortality upon anything.

Though there were nothing—though Florence had nothing else. *Save the past*—except the memory of the past. *This—viz* the dust of the great. *Those sublimities*—those sublime persons *Which..... chaos*—who have died and gone back to the elements from which they arose.

Angelo—Michael Angelo Buonarotti (1475—1564) great alike as a painter, sculptor and also something of a poet; supreme on account of the imaginative vastness of his work. *Alfieri*—born at Asti in Piedmont in the year 1741 and died in 1803. Alfieri was a tragic dramatist and his name is one of the greatest on the rolls of modern Italian literature. *Galileo*—is here called 'starry' because of his studies in astronomy.

With his woes—Galileo was imprisoned on account of his scientific opinions and he became blind in old age. These were among his woes.

Machiavelli—Nicolo Machiavelli (1469-1527) was both poet and practical politician. There is a common superstition that Machiavelli was the incarnation of all that is cunning and wicked in politics, but nothing can be further from the truth than this. On the other hand he was a strenuous lover of liberty and one of the earliest champions of Italian unity *Machiavelli's earth rose*—referring to the fact that Machiavelli was both born at Florence and died there.

Stanza 55. Italy has one advantage over all other climes; even from her ruins fresh greatness springs up anew.

Those are.....creation—**Expl.** Just as the physical world sprang up from only four elements, so these four minds were so vast and capacious that they could have furnished forth the whole of the intellectual creation—In other words all that is intellectually great in this world could have been recreated and reproduced from the genius of these four persons. *Which hath garment*—which has inflicted ten thousand injuries upon you: which has torn your robe of imperial sovereignty into ten thousand tatters.

Shall deny.....divinity—This is Italy's advantage over other lands. In other countries when there is ruin, the ruin is complete; but in Italy, fresh greatness springs up even from decay. (In other words men of great artistic genius are born in Italy even now.)

Impregnate.....divinity—inspired with the principle of new greatness. *Which gilds...ray*—which shines with new lustre upon your decay. *The great of yore*—the great artists of ancient Italy. *Such.....to-day*—Canova to-day is as great an artist as the great men of Italy's past. Canova was a great Italian sculptor (1757—1822)

Stanza 56. But though some of the departed great find their last resting place in Florence, where are those all-Etruscan three—Dante, Petrarch and Boccacio?

The all-Etruscan three—**N B** I have again the misfortune to differ wholly from Mr. Tozer. According to him, this passage simply means—'where repose those three who were all of them Etruscans'? But I think it would be far preferable to take, 'all Etruscan' together—in which case the meaning would be: 'Where repose those three who were Etruscans out and out? who were Tuscans of very Tuscans?. Of the four persons mentioned before —Alfieri, Galileo etc—only Machiavelli could be called a genuine Florentine. The rest no doubt were buried in Florence but they had little personal and family connection with Florence. Thus Alfieri was born in Piedmont, Galileo at Pisa and Michæl Angelo at Caprisi, while as for Dante, Petrarch and Boccacio—they were Florentines out and out.

Dante—the greatest poet of Italy and one of the greatest in all world. He was born at Florence in 1261 and was intimately connected with the public and political life of Florence, rising to be *Gonfaloniere* or chief official of the republic. But Florence,

was in those days torn by the internecine dissensions of the *Guelfs* and *Ghibellines* and among the Guelfs again by quarrels between the *Bianchi* and *Neri*; and as Dante belonged to the Bianchi, the more aristocratic section of the *Guelfs*, he was condemned to banishment and forfeiture in 1298. Thenceforward he wandered about from city to city of northern Italy dying at last at Ravenna where he was buried.

Petrarch—Francesco Petrarch, a great Italian poet and among the first revivers of learning in Italy, was born at Arezzo in 1304. Though he was a Florentine by birth, yet his father had been banished two years before; and so Florence was deprived of the honour of being his birth-place.—As noticed before, Petrarch spent the last year of his life at Arqua, a few miles from Padua.

The Bard of Prose—This was Boccacio, one of the greatest story-tellers of the world and the first great prose-writer of Modern Europe.

Hundred tales of Love—This was the *Decameron*, a collection of 100 stories mostly dealing with love, intrigue and the corruption of Church people

Distinguished.....life—In their life, they were different from common men, and so, in death also, they were different from the common herd. Hence they were buried elsewhere than in their native land.

Are.....dust—Have they died? *And have.....say*—And yet, has their country raised no monument over their graves? *Quarries*—marble quarries. *Furnish.....bust*—furnish marble sufficient to raise at least one poor bust. *Did they.....intrust*—Did they not care to entrust their bones to the soil of their own motherland? *Her breast*—the soil of her own land. *Their filial earth*—their loyal and affectionate dust.

Stanza 57. Dante sleeps afar by the sea-shore at Revenna; and Florence can claim neither to be the cradle nor the grave of Petrarch.

Ungrateful Florence—because Florence, unmindful of Dante's great genius, cast him forth *The upbraiding shore*—The adjective has reference to the 'chiding' of the sea-waves. *Dante... .shore*—As Scipio, the saviour of his country, was buried by the sea shore in a foreign land, so Dante was buried at the sea-coast town of Ravenna. (The elder Scipio Africanus

had a tomb, if he was not actually buried, at Liternum, and this tomb stood on the sea-shore.)

Thy factions—the party strife of the *Guelfs* and *Ghibellines* and the *Bianchi* and *Neri*. *Worse than civil war*—because these quarrels were not between two separate parties but almost between brother and brother in the same state. *Proscribed the bard*—banished him and afterwards condemned him to death.

Their children's children—In the very next century after Dante's death, Florence repented bitterly of her ingratitude to the poet and frequently attempted to recover his body. Failing to do this, they crowned his image in a church and the picture is still one of their treasured possessions.

Laureate brow—so called because in recognition of his poetical merits, Petrarch was formally crowned at the Capitol of Rome in 1341.

The crown—i.e. the crown of poetic fame. *Supremely wore*—wore with such supreme dignity. *Upon a far... ..grown*—refefring to the fact that Petrarch was born at Arezzo and not in Florence. *His fame*—This is going too far.—The life and grave of Petrarch might not belong to Florence ; but who could deprive Florence of his fame ? *His grave though rifled*—this happened in 1630. *Rifled*—violated and plundered. *Not thine own*—the grave stood at Arqua as we have already learnt.

Stanza 58. Boccacio died no doubt in his native earth but owing to the bigoted intolerance of priests, his grave is not to be found there.

To his parent earth dust—there is some uncertainty about the birth-place of Boccacio—Frorence, Paris and Certaldo (a village twenty miles from Florence) alike claiming the honour. —In any case he died at Certaldo and was buried in the Church of St. Michael and St. James. But the priests whom he had lost no opportunity of abusing in his book removed his tomb from the church.

Lies it not—does it not lie ?

Boccacio to his parent earth etc.—**Expl.** Boccacio died in his native Tuscany ; and yet does not his body still lie there and are not sweet requiems breathed over his grave ? No and why ? because the tomb bore the name of Boccacio and that provoked the wrath of the 'hyæna' bigot.

Requiem—funeral hymn. The name is derived from the first words of a Latin hymn : '*Requiem æternam*' etc. *Who..... tongue*—who developed the Tuscan language. *The Tuscan's siren tongue*—the sweet and melodious Tuscan language. *That music.....speech*—that language which itself is like music, which is like poetry among spoken languages. *Must bear.....wrong*—must bear marks of the injury which the hyaena bigot inflicts. *The hyæna bigot*—the intolerant and furious bigots of the Roman Catholic Church. (the comparison with the animal is suggested by the hyæna's habit of digging among graves)

Even his tomb.....whom—Construe thus. Even his tomb, being uptorn, (1) must bear marks of the bigot's room, (2) must not find a place among the meaner dead, (3) must not claim a passing sigh from the pilgrim.

Amidst the meaner dead- amidst the tombs of the vulgar, commonplace people of the earth.

Stanza 59. And Santa Croce is more noted for the tombs and monuments which she lacks than for those which she has.

Wants... ..dost—The dust of these great men does not lie within her precincts.

Yet for this want.....more—Expl. Just as the funeral procession of Junia was noted for the absence of the statues of Brutus and Cassius, so the Church of Santa Croce is more noted for the tombs which it does not possess than for the tombs which it does.

The Caesar's pageant—The reference is to the funeral procession of *Junia*, wife of Cassius and sister of Brutus. But there is nothing to show that Junia belonged to the Caesar family.—The statues of Brutus and Cassius who had been among the murderers of Julius Caesar were forbidden to be carried in this procession.

Rome's best son—Brutus so called because his patriotism led him to murder Caesar. *Happier Ravenna*—Dante passed the last years of his life at Ravenna being invited thither by Guido da Polenta, lord of Ravenna. *Fortress of falling Empire*—Ravenna is so called because of the important part it played in trying to stem the tide of Barbarian invasion in the 5th Century A. D. *Fortress.....empire*—the last bulwark of an empire which was then falling to pieces. *Tuneful relics*—another

instance of transferred epithet. It was the poet who was tuneful not his relics. *Vainly begs*—see note above.

Stanza 60. The pyramids of precious stone which have been raised in honour of the merchant princes of Florence—what are they worth in comparison with the humble turf that rises over the dust of Dante or Boccacio ?

What is her pyramid etc.—**N. B.** The poet is drawing a contrast between the splendid monuments raised in honour of the merchant-dukes of Florence and the humble memorial of poets like Dante and Patrarch.—And he says that people tread with far greater reverence over the dew that is sprinkled over such humble memorials than over the splendid pavement of those gorgeous mausoleums.

Pyramid of precious stones—The poet is thinking of the Church of St. Lorenzo at Forence with its 'tawdry, glaring and unfinished chapel.' The Medicis who rose to be Dukes of Florence (and who are burried in this church) made their money from commerce.

Porphyry jasper etc.—precious and beautiful stones. *All hues etc.....marble*—rather gems and marbles of all hues. *Momentary dews*—so called because they perish (i. e. are dried up) soon, in contrast with imperishable marble.

Sparkling.....stars—glittering from the reflection of starlight in the evening. *Infuse.....dead*—make the green turf which rises over these tombs greener still. *The green turf..... dead*—implying that the earth is the only tomb of those dead poets and that no tomb of marble has been raised over their graves. *Whose names.....Muse*—agreeing with 'the dead': 'the dead whose very names are like monuments of the Muses ; in other words' whose names are imperishably associated with poetry.' *The slab*—i. e. the marble slab. *Which paves.....head* —which forms a monument over the body of princes.

Stanzas 61 to 77.

The poet is now descending rapidly southwards ; but there is a pause in which he seems to be gathering up his strength before he plunges into the mighty subject of Rome. Metaphorically as well as literally the poet is now skirting round the outer fringes of Rome ; and he goes on to notice *Lake Thrasimene* with its sanguinary memories of fierce battle, the river *Clitumnus* with its sweet literary associations, and charming rural scenery,

the *waterfall of Terni*, and lastly, *Soracte's ridge* just to the north of Rome and from which one can have a fine view of the Eternal city.

Stanza 61. Florence has other treasures of art to show ; but they are not for me. I like far rather to study Nature in the fields than Art in the galleries.

More things—i. e. more treasures of art. *To greet.....eyes*—to appeal to the intellect and emotions as well as to the senses.

In Arno's dome.....shrine—i. e. the splendid art galleries of Florence ; lit. the mansions which house her princely art galleries. (There is no specific reference in Arno's dome. It has to be remembered however that the Duomo with the great *dome* of Brunneleschi, is one of the architectural glories of Florence.)

Where.....vies—those art galleries which are as rich in examples of sculpture as in specimens of painting where sculpture vies with painting.

Her rainbow sister—i. e. painting, referring to the brilliant use of colours by painters. *Not for mine*—not for my enjoyment. *I have been.....galleries*—My thoughts are more familiar with aspects of nature such as are to be met with in fields than with specimens of Art. *A work divine*—i. e, a great work of art. *Calls.....homage*—demands my tribute of admiration. *It*—i. e. my spirit. (Mark the three *it's* in this and the next line ; they all refer to 'spirit.') *Yields.....feel*—pays less homage than it really feels. *The weapon which it wields*—the power of appreciation which it possesses. *Is of another temper*—is called forth by a different kind of beauty.

Though a work.....temper—**Expl.** A great work of art naturally demands some tribute of admiration from me, yet I pay this tribute reluctantly—for my spirit responds more to natural beauty than to artificial. (The student will observe that the sentence overflows into the next stanza,)

Stanza 62. I am more at home on the shore of Lake Thrasimene which recalls fierce memories of the battle that was fought here,

I roam—connect with 'more at home' two lines below. *I roam.....at home*—**Expl.** I feel more comfortable when I wander on the shores of Lake Thrasimene, in those narrow passes which were fatal to the Roman army.

In the defiles.....rashness—**N. B.** The Roman army under Flaminius was lured by Hannibal into a very dangerous position —a narrow pass between the Lake on one side and a range of hills called the *Gualandra* on the other. The Romans were completely enclosed from on all sides and defeated with fearful slaughter.

Roman rashness—It was the negligence of Flaminius which was responsible for this fearful defeat of the Romans. He reached the shores of the lake at sun-set, and without caring to send out spies, marched into the pass not knowing that all the surrounding hills were occupied by the horse and light infantry of Hannibal.

For there the Carthaginian's skill etc.—for there I am vividly reminded of the military genius of Hannibal.'—Hannibal (247—183 B. C.) son of Hasdrubal was perhaps the greatest purely military commander of ancient times. From his childhood he had been sworn by his father to be an enemy of the Roman people ; and he faithfully carried out his vow.

As his skill beguiles etc—Mark the use of the *present tense* throughout this stanza. The poet seems to see the whole of the scene before him—(1) the skill of Hannibal which beguiles the Romans' (2) the long lines of the slain, (3) the rivers swollen with blood as they rush through the plain.

Beguiles the host—lures on the Roman army. *Where..... files*—where the brave troops are cut down in their lines and thickly strew the battle field. *Torrents*—small streams. (There were *two* streams which intersected the field both rising in the Gualandia and flowing into the lake.) *Torrents.....gore*—small mountain-streams swollen with blood into the dimensions of rivers *Reek*—To *reek* would literally mean 'to smoke' ; and here the river is spoken of as 'smoking with hot blood.' *Sultry*—parched ; barren. *With legions.....winds*—strewn with ranks of fallen soldiers as a field may be strewn with trees felled by wind. (The student will notice that here also the sentence overflows into the next stanza and completes itself there.)

Stanza 63. The frenzy of the battle was so keen that an earthquake passed away unheeded by the fighters.

Such the storm of battle etc—Byron's description is almost a paraphrase of the language of Livy. *The storm*—the intense fury of the battle. *The frenzy*—the mad enthusiasm of the fighters.

Whose convulsions etc—the tumult of their feelings made them insensible to all save thought of slaughter. *Beneath the fray*—while the battle was on.

An earthquake—It was no ordinary earthquake either. Livy tells us that it overthrew in great part many of the cities of Italy, turned the course of rapid streams, poured back the sea upon the river and tore down the very mountains."

Nature of rocking etc.—earth heaving tumultuously under their very feet. *Yawning forth etc.*—referring to the chasms which open up in the surface of the earth as a result of earth-quakes—'These chasms,' says the poet, 'opened, like graves in order to swallow up the corpses of the slain.' *Bucklers*—shields. *Those. winding sheet*—people whose only shroud were their shields. *Such is the absorbing hate*—so intense is the passion of hatred.

Stanza 64—The same idea is further developed.

A rolling bark—a tossing, heaving vessel referring to the tossing motion of the earth in an earthquake. (*Eternity*—i. e. the eternity of the next world. (Life is often compared to a voyage towards eternity; and here that idea is adopted and slightly modified.) *The ocean*—i. e. the ocean of eternal life. *To mark*—to observe. *The motions.....vessel*—i. e. the tossing of the earth. *Nature's law.... ..suspended*—referring to the fact that they lost all power of observation at the moment.

The awe which reigns—the terror which prevails. *When mountains tremble etc.*—i. e. when there is an earthquake. *Nature's law... ..words*—For the time they had become dead to the ordinary phenomena of Nature and so they recked nothing of the awe which must prevail when there is an earthquake and when in consequence, the birds leave their nests and withdraw to the clouds etc. *Down-toppling*—falling down headlong. *Stumble*—because of the trembling of the earth. *Bellowing*—from fear. *Man's dead.....words*—men find it impossible to express their fear in words.

Stanza 65. Today Thrasimenne is a scene of perfect peace and rest; but a river flowing through the plain takes its name—Sanguinetto—from the blood spilt in the field.

A sheet of silver—i. e. smooth and bright like a varnished silver-plate. *Rent by no ravage*—bearing the mark of no other injury. *Saved the gentle plough*—save that caused by the plough-

share *Their root*—viz. the roots of the trees. (The trees are as thick today as were the slain on the day of the battle.) *But a brook*—There is nothing else to remind one of the battle except a brook which takes its name from the conflict. *Of scanty-bed*—i. e. with a narrow channel. *Of scanty stream*—i. e. carrying but a small volume of water. *A name of blood*—the name of the river being *Sanguinetto* the bloody rivulet. *That days.....rain*—the rain of blood spilt on that day. *Sanguinetto tells you etc.*—the river tells you where the men were slain—where their blood made its water red. *Unwilling waters*—This is what Ruskin would call 'pathetic fallacy'—an attribution of human feelings to inanimate things.

Stanza 66. Unlike Sanguinetto Clitumnus recalls only gentle memories of peace and abundance.

Clitumnus—one of the eastern affluence of the Tiber. *Sweetest wave*—placid and gentle waters. *In thy sweetest wave*—connect with 'thou dust rear in l. 589.—' You bear on your placid waters the image of your grassy banks' *Of the .. crystal*—clear and transparent as if it were made of crystal. *In thy wave..... hid them*—in your waves which are as pure, as clear-shinning as any that was ever frequented by a river nymph in order to bathe her limbs and gaze upon their beauty. (In ancient Greece and Rome each river and fountain was supposed to have its own nymph—and Byron makes use of that idea here.) *Nothing hid them*—because the waters were so transparent. *Thou dust rear*—i. e. thou dust bear the image of. *The milk-white steer*—The milk-white cattle of Clitumnus have been famous since the days of Virgil. *The purest god*—the river itself is apostrophized as a God of waters. *Serene of aspect*—kindly and genial of face *Unprofaned*—unpollutted. *Surely.. .. slaughter*—Surely no slaughter could have taken place on thy bank. *A mirror and a bath etc.*—Even now you serve only as a mirror and bath for the young and beautiful Italian girls of this day.

Stanza 67. The happy and serene atmosphere of Clitumnus further dwelt upon. An ancient temple, delicately beautiful, still preserves the gentle memories of the past.

Of delicate proportion—gracefully built. *Keeps*—preserves Connect with 'its memory of thee'—'On thy shore a beautiful temple, standing on the mild declivity of a hill, still keeps alive your former memories.' *A mild declivity*—a gentle slope. *Thy current's calmness*—the calm and gentle stream of your waters.

Glittering—shining. *The finny darter*—i. e. fish. *Who dwells*—connect with 'finny darter.'—'The fish who dwell in your deep waters often leap up to view.' *Revels*—rejoices. *Thy glassy deep*—your smooth and pure bosom. *Chance*—perchance. *Still tells bubbling its tales*—The bubbles on the surface of the water proclaim that it is shallow In the deeper parts of the stream the fish sparkle to view, while a water-lily sails in the shallower part; and we know that it is shallow from the bubble that it sends up.

Stanza 68. Should you wander hither, do not pass unblest the genius of the place.

Pass not unblest—do not pass without paying your tribute to. *The genius of the place*—the spirit that presides over the place. *If through the air.....disgust*—**Expl.** (1) If the air that fans you your brow is gentler here than elsewhere. (2) If the grass on the margin of the stream is greener than elsewhere. (3) if the freshness of the whole scene pours like balm upon your heart and washes away for a time the dust and strain of the world—attribute it wholly to the genius of the place.

A Zephyr more serene—a breeze gentler and calmer than is to be found elsewhere. *Win to the brow*—reaches and cools your brow. *Along his margin*—along the border of the stream. *A more elegant green*—a green more vivid than that of the surrounding scenery. *The freshness of the scene*—the cool and pleasant beauty of the scene. *Sprinkle*—shower. *Lave*—bathe, wash.

From the dry.....baptism—if the freshness of the scene can wash away from your mind the dust and strain of the world and can baptise as with Nature's own holy dew. *Pay orisons*—offer your prayers. *To him*—i. e. the genius of the place. *This suspension of disgust*—this temporary abeyance of weariness.

Stanza 69. A far different scene. The wild cataract of Terni—described first as heard from afar; then as seen falling in a column of waters and lastly as if some one were gazing in the boiling eddy below.

N. B. The student will notice the climax to which the poet leads us in his discription. First, we have the roar *of waters* as the traveller hears it from a distance: then we have the *fall of waters*, when the cascade is actually seen tumbling down the

rock-side ; lastly, we have the *hell of waters* as it appears when the traveller looks down from above on the black eddy into which the cascade plunges.

Velino—a stream which joins the *Nar* which again is an affluent of the Tiber. *Cleaves.....precipice*—cuts its way through the precipice, which itself has been worn by the action of the waters. *The flashing mass*—the glittering mass of waters. Foams'—i. e. impetuously rushes downward. *Shaking*—viz. with the impact of its fall. *The abyss*—the dark chasm into which it falls. *Where they howl.....torture*—The waters of the fall as they roar and hiss and are churned into foam below seem like accursed spirits suffering endless agony in Hell. *While the sweat of etc*—**N. B.** The sentence which here begins overflows into the next stanza and is completed only at l. 626.

The meaning may be thus explained. The waters of the fall have been compared to spirits in agony. And here the poet says : "The sweat wrung out of their agony.—(1) curls round the jet-black rocks surrounding the gulf. (2) mounts the sky as spray. (3) and descends again from there in a fine rain which makes the ground all about as green as emerald. *The sweat.....agony*—the sweet that is distilled from them as they suffer from fearful torture *Phlegethon*—the river of fire which flows in hell. *Curls round*—rises in graceful spiral. *Rock of jet*—jet black rocks. *Rocks.....set*—rocks which rise sheer on all sides of the gulf like sentinels on watch.

Stanza 70 71. Description of the waterfall continued. (1) The spray cast up from the eddy below descends again in a shower of gentle rain and makes the ground green like one emerald. (2) The water leaps down from rock to rock, crushes the cliff, tears out path for itself and looks like the fountain of an infant sea.

Mounts in spray—rises up in a cloud of fine particles of water. *And thence again etc*—But the spray cannot mount up for ever. After a while it returns downwards again : and when it so descends it seems like a shower of gentle rain which makes perpetual April for the ground. *Unceasing shower*—an unending shower of rain. *Which round*—connect with l. 625. *Which ground*—This unceasing shower makes a sort of perpetual spring for the ground i. e. imparts an element of perennial freshness to the ground.

Unemptied cloud—a cloud of rain that never exhausts itself. *Making it.....emerald*—keeping it green like an emerald all

through the year. *Profound*—deep. *The gulf*—i. e. the chasm into which the water is poured. *The giant element*—the majestic mass of waters. *How the giant element etc*—Here begins another sentence which overflows into the next stanza and does not end till l. 636.

Explain thus :

(1) The giant element leaps with delirious bounds and crushes the cliff on its way.

(2) These cliffs, being worn by the fierce foot steps of the waterfall, yawn in chasms and thus make room for a broad column of waters to pass.

(3) And this broad column of waters looks fitter to be a source of the sea than to be merely a source for the river as it actually is.

With delirious bound—with gigantic leaps as those of a mad man. *Yield in chasms etc*—The cliffs being worn down by the action of the water disclose yawning gaps through which the river runs tumultuously out. (Large crevices open on the cliff side and thus make a pathway through the waters so that they may rush out.

Stanza 71.

Which roars on etc—For construction see above. *Shows more like the fountain etc*—As a matter of fact, only a small rivulet issues out from this waterfall ; but the waterfall itself is so huge that it seems more fit to be the birth-place of an infant ocean and not merely of a river.

Fountain—source, *An infant sea*—sea in miniature and not merely a river. *Torn.....world*—a sea which should gush out from the sides of mountains when the universe is in the birth-pangs of producing a new world. *Throes*—i.e. birth-pangs. *Thus*—as it actually is. *Gushingly*—impetuously. *With many windings*—i.e. following a meandering course. *Look back*—i.e. from a distance upon the waterfall. *It comes.....eternity*—it rushes forward with impetuous force. *Like an eternity*—as with the impetuous force of eternity. *To sweep down*—to bear down. *Charming.....dread*—exercising upon us a fascination by its very terror. *A matchless cataract*—Byron says in his notes that the cascade of Terni, the *caskata del marmori* (marble falls) as the Italians call it, is worth all the cascades and torrents of Switzerland put together.

Stanza 72. Over the boiling tumult of the waters there rises a many-coloured Iris and seems with its steady brilliance like love keeping watch over madness.

Horribly beautiful—beautiful and terrible at the same time (a sort of oxymoron). *On the verge*—i.e. on the very edge of the waterfall. *From side to side*—spanning the waterfall like an arch. *Beneath.. ..worn*—catching the reflection of the early sunlight. *An Iris sits*—A crescent rainbow is formed. (Of course the rainbow is caused by the action of sunlight upon the fine spray cast up by the boiling eddy of the waterfall.)

An Iris sits etc—**Construe** thus. An Iris sits like hope upon a death bed and bears its colour serenely, thus resembling 'love watching madness.'

N. B. The student will notice that the image of the rainbow is illustrated by two comparisons.

(1) The rainbow remaining steady amidst the fearful tumult of the waters is compared to hope sitting beside a deathbed. (2) Again, the rainbow bearing its brilliant colours serenely while all around is torn by distracted waters is compared to love watching over madness. (The rainbow is compared to *love* and *hope* while the boiling waters of the cascade are compared respectively to deathbed and madness.)

The infernal surge—the hellish tumult of the waters. *Unworn its steady dyes*—its colour remaining fast and unfaded (a participal clause)

Distracted—frenzied. *Serene*—with unmoved tranquillity. *All their beams unshorn*—simply repeats the idea of 'unworn its steady dyes.' *The torture of the scene*—the fury and tumult of the scene. *With unalterable mien*—with serene and undisturbed countenance.

Stanza 73. The woody Appenines—children of the Alps! I might have worshipped them more if I had not seen the Jungfrau and Mt. Blanc. Parnassus and Olympus, Etna and Atlas.

The infant Alps—The Appenines break off from the maritime Alps and are really an offshoot and continuation of the Alpine chain, so that they may very properly be called the 'Infant Alps.' *The mighty appearance*—i. e. the Alps. *Where the pine... Lauwine*—both clauses qualifying 'parents.'

Where the pine etc.—i. e. those mountains where avalanches thunder and where the pine tree grows upon more savage peaks.

Shaggy—not tree-covered but 'savage.' 'Jagged.' *Might... more*—might have received greater admiration from me. *Soaring*—rising high towards the sky. *Jungfrau*—an Alpine peak in Switzerland. *I have seen.....snow*—I have seen the Jungfrau hold up its mantle of virgin snow towards the sky.

Hoar—hoary, white. *Glaciers*—snow rivers, avalanches. *Bleak*—desolate. *Chimari*—a part of Albania. *The thunder hills* This is the same word as Acroceraunian Mountains. Elsewhere, in Canto II. Byron describes them as Chimara's Alps, and describes them as "nature's volcanic amphi-theatre."

Stanza 74. But now they seem of lesser dignity—all except Soracte's ridge which again requires the aid of Horace for remembrance.

Of old name—of ancient repute. *Parnassus*—a mount in Phocis in Greece supposed to have been the haunt of the Muses. *Like.....spot*—as if they have been the guardian deities of the place.

As it were for fame—Connect with 'fly' in the preceding line. 'I saw the eagles fly as if in competition, as if for the purpose of winning a prize: for always they kept on flying higher and higher to an indescribable height.'

Ida—a peak in Asia Minor. *With a Trojan's eye*—i. e. from the point of view of the ancient Trojans, viz. from the site of ancient Troy. *Olympus*—a peak in Thessaly, the highest mountain in Greece, fabled to have been abode of the Gods. *Atlas*—a range of mountains in northern Africa. *Soracte's height*—a ridge to the north of Rome; the last dying offshoot of the Appenines. (Byron's comparison of this small hill to a breaking wave is particularly fine.) *Not now in snow*—as it may be in winter or as it used to be when Horace described it. *Which ask.....remembrance*—**N. B.** I have again the misfortune to differ wholly from Mr. Tozer. According to him "which" agrees only with 'snow' so that the whole passage would mean—'there is no snow on Soracte now and it would require the help of Horace to remember that snow is ever there.'

But I think it would be much better to take "which" as agreeing with 'Soracte's height'. It is not simply the snow on Soracte which asks Horace's aid for remembrance but Soracte itself.

Stanzas 75-76 Soracte can well recall memories of Horace to people. But in youth I hated Horace so much because I was forced to study him as part of my daily task ; that even now, though I can understand him, I can find no pleasure in his works.

N. B. Though the ridge of Soracte is part of the Appenine chain yet it is detached from the main range and *rises abrupt from the surrounding ground.* Hence the comparison with a long-swept wave which gathers itself up, so to speak, and seems ready to break against the shore and yet in the very act of breaking remains suspended, as it were.

From out the plain..... wave—The ridge rises from the level ground like a long-swept wave that heaves from the level surface of the sea and prepares to break against the shore.

A long-swept wave—a wave coming from afar ; a wave that gathers its force from afar and is ready to dash with its accumulated force againsr the shore. *On the curl*—even in the act of breaking against the shore. *Hangs pausing*—remains suspended.

Not in vain etc—N. B. The whole passage from here to 'sickening memory' in l. 677 may be taken together ; and the substance may be thus given.

"The name of Horace is so closely associated with this hill that those who please may well recall his verses here and awake the hill with Latin echoes. But as for myself, I hated the daily routine lesson so much that I could not conquer it even for the poet's sake so that I can not record with pleasureanything of that daily drug which turned my memory sick in you." Of course, the reference is to the fact that Horace is the favourite text book in English schools ; and boys had to go through the wearisome grind —not unfamiliar to Indian students—of parsing, declension, conjugation and all that horrible business.

Rake his recollection—dig into his memory. *May awake... ... echoes*—'may spout Latin verses which will be re-echoed by the hill.' Soracte calls up Horace so naturally to the mind that people may well recall and quote his verses here. But I cannot, says the poet ; and why? Because I had to learn Latin as part of my daily task and so came to hate the whole business.

The drilled dull lesson—the lesson which we are forced to learn by rote and which therefore becomes dull and tedious to us. *Repugnant*—unwillng. *Forced down word by word*—mechanically rammed down our throats so to say and thus causing disrelish.

I abhorred.....to record—**Expl.** I hated the task so much that, even for the sake of Horace, I could not master the lesson that was rammed down my throat so that I cannot find any pleasure in recording etc ; (and here the sentence overflows into the next stanza.)

Stanza 76. *Aught that recalls etc*—Connect with 'record in the last stanza.—**Expl.** I hated to master my Latin lessons in youth so that I find no pleasure in recording anything that recalls the memories of those hateful lessons now—lessons which, when I learned them used to make me sick.

The daily drug—the lesson which was rammed down my throat like some bitter dose of medicine. *Turned.....memory*—the very memory of which used to make me sick. (The construction is loose.)

Though Time hath taught.....its health—The sentence is cumbrous but the idea is very simple. The substance may be thus given :

'Since then I have meditated over what I then learnt i. e. have read Horace again and again. But the memory of those early days has given such a tinge of bitterness to my mind that, though I now understand Horace and appreciate him, I can no longer find pleasure in his works.' (Being associated with hateful daily lessons, Horace himself has become hateful ; he appeals to my intellect, not to my feelings.)

Fixed inveteracy—rooted bitterness. *Such...early thought*—The impatience with which I then learnt my Horace has given such a cast of bitterness to my whole mind that I cannot now restore etc.

With the freshness.....choose—A cumbrous clause. 'The freshness of my mind wore out before I could relish that which I might have relished if I had been left free to choose for myself.'

Expl. I might have liked Horace even in youth if I had been left free to read him for myself. But learning him as part of my daily task made me sick ; and later, when I grew to understand him, my mind had lost its early freshness and so could no longer find any pleasure in its studies.

Freshness—early impressionability of the mind.

Might have sought—might have voluntarily chosen for itself. *If free to choose*—if I had been left free to choose. (I might have turned to Horace of my own accord if I had been left free to choose.) *Cannot.....health*—cannot restore my taste to its normally healthy condition.

Stanza 77. There is no deeper moralist, no saner critic, no livelier satirist than Horace : but—thanks to the vicious education of my youth—I can find no charm in his graceful lyrics.

But mine—rather 'not for thy fault or mine but for the fault of our vicious system of education.' *Not feel*—i. e. not feel the charm of. *To understand not feel*—as in the case with me. *Deeper moralist*—wiser moral teacher. *Rehearse our little life*—analyse the littlenesses of our life. *No deeper moralist*—i e. than Horace.

Prescribe his art—lay down the true canons of poetry. (Horace lays down the rules of his art in his *Ars Poetica*.) *Livelier*—wittier. *Nor livelier pierce*—There is no satirist who can pierce the conscience as Horace does. *Awakening..... heart*—you arouse the conscience but do not give pain to the feelings.

Stanzas 78 to 163.

From here till near the end of the book the poet expatiates with the full force of his genius and with a rolling splendour of matchless eloquence upon the many glories of ancient Rome—*Imperial glories* which have expired star by star as well as *Artistic glories many* of which still survive and strike the mind with awe. Columns, arches, mansions crumbling to decay, and great and historic memories—nothing escapes the poet's survey ; and the whole is a dazzling medley of description, passionate grief and sombre moralization.

We give below a sketch of the topics chiefly touched upon :

(1) The poet begins with a general lamentation over the decay and desolation of Rome. (78 to 82.)

(2) Then he gives a rhetorical turn to his thoughts. 'What would Sylla and Pompey have thought of Rome's' present decay ?' The name of Sylla suggests a comparison with Cromwell. (82-88.)

(3) None to equal the ancient Romans save perhaps Napoleon : contrast between him and Cæsar. (89-92.)

(4) The fall of Napoleon suggests some moral reflections on human life, ambition, tyranny, freedom. (93-98).

(5) The tomb of Metella, (99-105.)

(6) The Palatine and its ruins (106-109.)

(7) The column to Phocas, the pillar of Trojan, the arch of Titus, the Capitoline hill, the Tarpeian rock, and the Forum—the last suggesting Rienzi, Rome's new-born Numa. (110-114.)

(8) Numa suggests Egeria (115-119.)

(9) Moralization on love and life. (120-127).

(10) The Coliseum ; with a passionate interlede on his own sufferings. (128-145.)

(11) The Pantheon. (146-147).

(12) The story of the daughter feeding her father with her own milk. (148-151.)

(13) The mausoleum of Hadrian—now the Castle of St. Angelo. (152).

(14) St. Peter's (153-159.)

(15) The Vatican. (160-163.)

(1) Stanzas 78 to 82.

The poet laments passionately over Rome and her ruin.

Stanza 78. Those who are desolate of heart must turn for very sympathy to Rome.

City of the soul—refuge of those who are desolate of heart. *My country*—country dear to my heart ; country which I have adopted for my very own. *Must turn to thee*—to draw consolation from you. *The orphans of the heart*—those who are starved of love, sympathy and affection.

The orphans.....empire—The idea is this : Rome is lovely and desolate ; so there must be spiritual kinship between her and those who are forlorn and weary of heart. *And control*—i. e. must control, must suddue.

Must coutrol.....petty misery—'Faced with thy stupendous ruin they must cease to whine about their own petty miseries.' *Sufferance*—incorrect for 'suffering.' *What are.....sufferance*—i. e. in comparison with your vast and age-long woe.

Cypress.....owl—The *cypress*, a dark-leaved tree, is associated with funerals and the owl is a bird that dwells in the midst of desolation. Hence the mention of those names. ('Come and see the cypress that grows over the ruins of Rome; come and hear the owls that whoop through the decayed places of Rome; in other words, view the wide desolation that once was Rome.)

Plod your way—Plodding is used of heavy walking through the mire. The idea is this: 'At Rome you have to walk ankle-deep through the ruins of the past'

Plod...temples—'Ruins of temples and palaces encumber your step in every direction; and you have to make your way through them,

Evils of a day—short-lived, temporary misfortunes. *A world is at our feet*—The whole ancient world (epitomized in Rome) is here in ruins at our feet. *Fragile*—perishable. perishable. *Our clay*—our mortal frames.

N. B. The contrast throughout is between the petty and short-lived woes under which we, human beings, groan, and the wide and universal ruin of Rome.

Stanza 79. Rome is the Niobe of nations—marble wilderness: even the ashes of her suns have been scattered far and wide.

The Niobe of nations—Niobe boasted that she was greater than Latona, for she had 14 children while Latona had only two Apollo and Artemis To punish her for this insolence, the children of Latona killed all her children, and Niobe grew into stone from the excess of her grief. (The number of Latona's children has been variously given from 20 to 5; but 14 is the generally accepted number.) *Childless*—(keeps up the idea in Niobe). She is a like parent that has lost her children, because she has lost those states which were like off spring to her.

Crownless—because she has lost the crown of glory which she formerly wore.

Her speechless woe—a grief too deep for words, *An empty urn*—referring to the fact that she did not possess even the ashes of her dead sons. **Expl.** 'She holds a funeral urn in her hand; but o, bitterness of woe, even this urn is empty: the holy dust it contained was scattered long ago.')

The Scipio's tomb—The family tomb of the Scipios was discovered near the Appian Way in 1780. The bones of many dis-

tinguished members of the family were found but they were dispersed shortly after. *The very sepulchres etc*—Such is the desolation of Rome that even her sepulchres are tenantless. *Tenantless of their heroic dwellers*—empty of the relics of those heroic persons who were buried there. *A marble wilderness*—a desolate city of marble palaces; a wilderness, not of trees but of marble houses. *Mantle her distress*—clothe her nakedness; hide her desolation from human gaze. ('Better,' says the poet, 'that Rome should be submerged than that her distress should be exposed to the gaze of the multitude.')

Stanza 80. Nature & man—both have worked their will upon Rome She is such a chaos of ruin that no one can safely pick his way through her.

The Goth, the Christian—Both Christians and Barbarians have contributed to the ruin of the city. *The Goth*—referring, not to the Goths specially, but to all the Barbarian invaders of Rome. (The Goths under Alaric beseiged Rome in 408 and sacked the city in 410; and in 546 the city was captured by Totila.)

The Christian—referring to the fact that Christian bigotry pulled down many of the pagan temples of ancient Rome; also perhaps to the invasion of Rome by such Christians as the Constable of Bourbon (1527.)

Flood and fire—Rome was once destroyed by fire at the time of the invasion of the Goths; but the reference can hardly be to that; perhaps the poet is thinking of the great conflagration of Rome during the reign of Nero.

Have dealt.... Pride—have humbled the greatness of Rome. *The seven-hilled city*—As Venice stands upon a cluster of islands so Rome stands upon a cluster of hills, mostly of Volcanic origin. Of course the city extended beyond the original seven hills even in the days of Rome's ancient grandeour and now it stretches on both banks of the Tiber.

She saw.....expire—The features of her greatness, the chief landmarks of her glory, disappeared one after another like stars vanishing from the firmament one after another. *Up the steep*—Connect with 'saw' in the preceding line.

Up the steep.....Capitol—**Expl.** She had the humiliation of seeing Barbarian monarchs riding up the steep path along which her own triumphal cars used formerly to mount.

Where the car.....capitol—When Roman generals returned victorious from abroad the senate sometimes granted them the honour of a triumph : In this triumph the victorious general rode in his car while the captives and spoils taken by him followed in the rear.

The procession climbed up the Capitoline hill and proceeded to the great temple of Jupiter which stood on the summit. *Tower*—standing for palaces and noble mansions. *Nor left a site*—Even the places where they stood have now been forgotten. *Chaos of ruins*—a huge wilderness of desolation. *Who shall trace Night*—The substance may be thus given: Rome's ruin is so complete that nothing definitely can be recognised or identified there.

Who shall. void—Who will make his way through the wide emptiness which now reigns over Rome ? *Over the dim....., light*—Who will cast some light, however faint, upon the remnants of Rome's ancient ruin ? *And say here was*—who will definitely locate or identify places ? *Where all night*—where everything is wrapt in a double coating of darkness

Stanza 81 The poet continues in the same strain ; it is difficult if not impossible to identify the ruins of ancient Rome.

The double night..... us—Time has obliterated many of the relics of ancient Rome. And our ignorance has completed the rest of the work. In other words, what with time, what with ignorance, our forgetfulness of Rome is now complete.

We but feel.....err—**Expl.** In our investigations we are never sure of the path ; we can only grope our way in the dark and our conclusions are generally wrong. *Feel our way*—stumble and grope in the dark. *The ocean.....desert*—**Expl.** We can make our way through the ocean with the help of charts, even the stars have been mapped and do not cause much confusion ; but Rome is like a trackless and pathless desert where it is difficult to find our way.

The ocean.....chart—The navigable paths of the sea have been mapped. *Her ample lap*—The poet is thinking of Gray's ample page of knowledge. *Is as the desert*—i. e. is pathless like the desert. *Where we steer*—i. e. where we steer blindly. *Stumbling.....recollection*—at every step falling across memories of the buried past. *Eureka*—'I have found it' the explanation of

Archimedes when he had discovered a means for testing the purity of gold. *When but.....near*—when we are deceived by some false and delusive shape.

Stanza 82. Alas for Rome! Alas for the departed glory of Rome! And alas for earth which never will be so happy as when Rome was great!

Alas.....triumphs—Alas for the three hundred triumphs which Rome enjoyed in the days of her glory! (The triumphs granted to victorious Roman generals have been fixed at the number of 320.) *And the day.....away*—**Expl.** Alas for the day when Brutus made the assassin's dagger more famous than the general's sword! (Alas for the day when such heroism as that of Brutus was possible!)

In bearing fame away—in snatching away the prize of fame. (Generally speaking, it is the soldier's sword which succeeds in winning fame; but Brutus made the assassin's dagger equally successful in winning it.) *For Tully's voice*—for the eloquence of Cicero. Marcus Tullius Cicero was the greatest orator of Rome.

Lay—poetry, song. *Virgil's lay*—Publius Virgilius Maro was one of the greatest poets of Italy. *Livy's pictured page*—the picturesque narrative of the Roman historian, Livy. *Alas..... page*—In other words, alas for the great orators, poets and historians of ancient Rome! *These*—viz. these orators, poets etc. *Shall.....resurrection*—will help Rome to arise again, will keep alive the memory of Rome.

All beside—viz. the material grandeur of Rome. *Alas for earth etc*—The poet has hitherto been lamenting only on account of Rome; but now he says that Rome's fall is a calamity to the world at large. *Never shall.....free*—Earth was happy when Rome was free; but now that Rome is gone, we shall never again see the same happiness on earth.

Stanzas 83 to 88.

The poet is still harping upon the ruin of Rome: but he gives a rhetorical turn to his moralising. What would Sylla, what would Pompey, what would the wolf-mother of Rome have said to the present decay of Rome?

Stanzas 83-84. Sylla, you who were a Roman, with all your vices—could you have foreseen this fearful desolation of Rome?

N. B. In Stanza 83 we have only the apostrophe to Sylla ; the sentence is completed in the next stanza.

Triumphant Sylla—Lucius Cornelius Sylla (138 to 78 B. C.) was one of the 'great bad men' of Roman history ; and his war with Marius was the beginning of those civil struggles which plagued Rome for many a year. He defeated the Marian party, B. C. 87 ; then went on the Mithridatic expedition to Asia Minor and conquered Pontus ; returned and became Master of Rome B. C. 82 ; became dictator B. C. 80 ; abdicated, B. C. 79, and died next year. It was the abdication of the dictatorial power which seems to have specially impressed Byron.

Whose chariot.....wheel—Fortune is proverbially described as fickle ; but the poet says that Sylla had subdued even Fortune. His chariot, the poet says, was mounted upon the wheel of Fortune. (Sylla, from the uniform success of his career, was called *Felix*, the fortunate.)

Thou who didst.....Asia—The construction is confused though the meaning is plain. There are two clauses :

(1) 'Thou who didst subdue thy country's foes, ere..... wrongs.' (2) 'Thou who didst refuse to reap...Asia.' —Both the clauses repeat the same idea : with Sylla punishment of his country's foes came first, satisfaction of his private feeling of revenge came afterwards.

Thy country's foes—referring to the Mithridatic expedition undertaken by Sylla in B. C. 87. He had defeated the Marian party but went to Pontus first before completing his works of vengeance.

To feel.....wrongs—to take vengeance for your injuries. *Reap.....wrongs*—to gather the harvest of vengeance that was your own ; in other words, to wreak the full measure of vengeance upon your enemy. *Till thine.....Asia*—till you had conqnered the Asiatic kingdom of Pontus. *Thine Eagles*—the standards of your army. (The eagle was the badge of the Roman legions.) *Prostrate*—humiliated. *Annihilated senates*—destroyed the powers of the Roman senate.

With all thy vices—in spite of thy vices. *Roman.....vices* —You had the greatness of a Roman in the midst of all your vices. How ? Because you were magnanimous enough to abdicate the dictatorship. *Didst lay down*—abdicated. *An*

atoning smile—a smile which made up for your vices ; a smile of supreme indifference to earthly power. *A more.....crown*—a power greater than that of any earthly monarch- viz. the power of the dictator.

Stanza 84. *The dictatorial wreath*—the power possessed by a Roman dictator. (The dictator was a magistrate who exercised supreme authority over the state and could be appointed only in an emergency, during a temporary suspension of the constitution. Sylla got himself appointed as dictator by a servile senate in B. C. 81.)

Couldst thou divine—could you over foresee ? *To what.. moral*—to what nothingness the power of Rome would be reduced one day. *To what*—i. e. what a miserable condition. *That*—viz. that power, the power possessed by Rome. *Which made.....Rome*—which raised you above the level of human beings.

So supine—so low ; so abject. *By aught than Romans*—by persons other than Romans. *And that so supine.....laid*—**Expl.** 'You could conceive that Rome might be subjugated by Romans for you had done it yourself. But could you conceive that Rome might be humiliated by other than Romans ?

Named eternal—as implying that her power would last for ever. *Arrayed.....conquer*—never sent forth her armies except to victory. *Arrayed*—equipped. *Who veiled.....shadow*—whose power lay like a vast shadow upon the earth- She was so great that her power eclipsed the grandeur of the rest of the earth. *And displayed.....wings*—She displayed her wings so that the whole horizon was overcanopied by them and thus failed from the sight. (The idea is simply a repetition of what has been said before ; the wings of Rome overcanopied the horizon and hid it from the sight. In other words, the whole earth was covered with the glory of Rome.)

Stanza 85. Sylla suggests Cromwell. There is a moral of destiny lurking behind Cromwell's life.

First of victors—This surely is an exaggeration. As we have said before, Sylla's abdication, the theatrical grandeur of this act, made a powerful appeal to Byron's theatrical nature. *Our own...Cromwell*—The construction is loose and at the same time incomplete. Perhaps the poet means : our own Cromwell, the sagest of usurpers, was also a great victor.

Sagest—wisest. *Userper*—here in the sense of one who exercises a power to which he was not born. *Swept off senate*—destroyed the power of Parliaments. *While*—at the same time *Hewed.....block*—i. e. had the king executed. *Throne*—here stands for the king. *A block*—i. e. the executioner's block.

See.....ages—See what heavy price one has to pay for being free and famous. (Cromwell achieved freedom for himself and his country and has become famous through all ages; but he had to commit many crimes for this.)

Beneath his fate.....destiny—destiny teaches us a lesson through his life. (**N. B.** Cromwell died on the anniversary of his two greatest victories. The moral of destiny which Byron draws from this is that the day of man's death is not the least fortunate day of his life.) *His day of double victory*—Cromwell gained the battle of Dunbar on the 3rd of September 1050; and the battle of Worcester on the 3rd September 1651. Hence he considered this day as the most fortunate of his life; and he died on the 3rd of September 1658. *Two realms*—Scotland by the victory of Dunbar and England by that of Worcester. *Happier*—Mark the touch of cynicism, of affected contempt for the world, in this expression. Cromwell, says the poet, must have been happier in dying than in winning his victories. *Yield his breath*—i. e. die.

Stanza 86. The day of Cromwell's double victory was also the day of his death. Thus death is not the least auspicious event in a man's life.

The third...force—The day on which Cromwell had been almost crowned,—on the anniversary of that very day, death removed him from his throne of force. *Whose former course*—which in former years. *Had...crowned him*—had almost made him king. *Deposed*—removed. *His throne of force*—the throne which he usurped. *Laid him.....clay*—consigned him (his body of clay) to the clay of earth itself.—His body was dust and now it was returned to the dust of the earth.

Showed not Fortune.....tomb—thus, viz. by making Cromwell die on the most auspicious day of his life. *Fortune showed*—that fame and power were in her eyes of less value than death. *Consume our souls*—eat out our hearts. *To compass*—to obtain. *Through.....way*—by every endeavour however hard it may be.

Were they.....door—**Expl.** Fortune cares nothing for fame and power, in fact cares less for them than for death. If man also

were of the same opinion, how different would have been his lot? **N. B.** Man's misery is due to the fact that he cares very much for fame and power; but if he had cared nothing for them, his lot would have been considerably happier.

Stanza 87. Addressing Pompey's statue, the poet asks—did you and Cæsar live once and die? Did such glorious incidents really happen? Or was it all the pageant of a dream?

Dread statue—the majestic statue of Pompey. (Cneius Pompius, called Magnus or the great, was one of the great figures of Roman history. There was much rivalry between him and Cæsar and at last he fell before the younger and greater man. —His statue, one of the rare instances of a naked statue in Rome, is now to be found in the Spada palace. It formerly stood in the Curia Pompey where was held that meeting of the senate in which Cæsar was assassinated; and it was at the foot of Pompey's statue that Cæsar fell when attacked by the assassins). *In the austerest.....majesty*—in severe and naked simplicity.

Thy bathed base—another instance of proleptic adjective. The pedestal of the Statue must have been washed with blood as Cæsar fell. *Folding his robe*—Plutarch tells us that, when Cæsar found death inevitable, he drew his robe about him and fell near Pompey's statue. *An offering to thine altar etc*—Connect with 'bloody Cæsar' two lines above. The bloody corpse of Cæsar was an offering to your altar from Nemesis—Of course the reference is to the life-long rivalry between Pompey and Ceasar and Pompey's defeat at the hands of the latter. Ceasar's death, says the poet, was a measure of retributive vengeance.

Nemesis—Goddess of vengeance. She is called queen of Gods and men, because Vengeance is dear to the hearts of all—even to the Gods. *Did he die*—did this glorious incident really happen? Or is it only a figment of a dream? *Have been..... scene*—did you really live and really conquer a hundred kings or were you only the actors in some stage play?

Stanza 88. The poet addresses the thunderstricken image of the wolf-mother of Rome and asks—Do you still guard over Rome and keep watch over your children?

Thunder-stricken nurse of Rome—**N. B.** Romulus, the founder of Rome, was said to have been nursed by a she-wolf. Hence the she-wolf is spoken of as the foster-mother of the Romans and the Romans are supposed to have derived their courage and grim ferocity of temper from her. Images of the

she-wolf must have been numerous in Rome but only two were particularly famous; and one of these was struck by lightning.—The image now preserved in the museum of the Capitol and to which Byron refers has been conjectured to have been the one mentioned by Cicero.

Whose brazen-imaged dugs etc.—**Expl.** Within the dome of the Capitoline museum your brazen-imaged dugs still impart the milk of conquest: in other words your image represents you as imparting milk etc. *Your brazen imaged dugs*—your teats carved in bronze. *A monument.....art*—a relic of ancient sculpture. *Mother of the mighty heart*—you who possessed a grim fierceness of character. *Which the great founder...teat*—that fierceness and strength which Romulus must have sucked from you with the milk of your breasts and which, through him, was transmitted to the Roman race generally.

Roman Jove—so called because Jove, Jupiter, was the guardian deity of the Romans. *Jove's ethereal dart*—i. e. lightning. *Thine ..cubs*—i. e. the children of Rome. *Thy fond charge*—the objects of your affectionate care.

(3) Stanzas 89-92.

A slight interlude Byron is still harping upon the same subject—the greatness of the Romans. 'None to equal these ancient Romans', he says, 'save perhaps Napoleon.' A contrast between Napoleon and Ceasar.

Stanza 89. The poet answers the question he has himself put. The she-wolf still keeps watch over Rome; but her foster-children, the grand Romans of old, are all dead. Yet, since creation, none else has approached their glory save Napoleon.

Thou dost—i. e. dost yet guard thy immortal cubs. *Thy foster babes*—your foster-children, the men of Ancient Rome, so called because Romulus, their great ancestor, had been suckled by a she wolf. *The men of iron*—those men of grim and iron determination viz. the ancient Romans. *Reared*—raised, built. *Their sepulchres*—the ruins of ancient Rome.

Men bled.....distance—**Expl.** The men of the modern world have been only aping the deeds of those ancient Romans. Just as the Romans bled, fought and conquered, so we also have been doing the same in imitation of the god-like Romans.

In imitation...feared—i.e. in imitation of the ancient

Romans. *The same course steered*—have been following in the same path as that of the Romans. *At apish distance*—Only they have been doing so at a distance like slavish imitators. *None have.....reared*—But though people have been mimicking the Romans none has been able to approach their supremacy.

One vain man—Napoleon. See l. 817 below. *Who..... slave*—who is not dead but, worse than that, is the slave of his own slaves, i. e. has been imprisoned by those whom he had conquered before. *Vanished by himself*—overpowered not by his enemies but his own weakness—his ambition and vanity.

Stanza 90. Napoleon was a kind of bastard Caeser : the latter's God-like variety was something unapproachable.

The fool.....dominion—befooled by his own vain lust for dominion ; misled by his own overweening ambition. *A kind of bastard Caesar*—a spurious, adulterated version of Caesar. 'Caesar scapin,' as Byron would say—a sort of 'scamp' Caesar. ('Brummagem' Caeasar would be the modern equivalent.) *With steps unequal*—unable to attain to the god-like stride of Caesar ; unble to equal his lofty port and majestic gait. *Following.....steps*—striving to follow in the wake of Caesar, but following him lamely at a distance. *The Roman's mind*—the character of Caesar *Modelled*—fashioned. *Terrestrial mould*—earthly pattern.

The Roman's mind.....mould—The mind of Caesar was conceived on a grander scale : it was more god-like than human. *With passions...cold*—His passions were more intense and tumultuous and yet his reason calmer and thus kept his passions in check. *An immortal instinct*—a natural impluse towards greatness. *Which redeemed.....bold*—which more than made up for the weakness of a character that was at once tender and audacious. *So soft yet bold*—**N. B.** It was this combination of courage and softness which appealed to Byron. But was this combination real? or did it only exist in Byron's mind? Byron loved to suppose that Caesar was naturally susceptible to the charms of beauty, fansying some distant resemblance to himself in this respect ; but was this really the case? One doubts.

Alcides.....beamed—**Expl.** When succumbing before the charms of Cleopatra, he seemed like Hercules with a distaff ; and yet anon he shone forth in all the splendour of his might. *Alcides with a distaff*—After the murder of Iphitis, Hercules,

to be purified of his crime, was sold as a slave to Omphale, queen of Lydia; and while there he worked among the women of Omphale, spinning cotton by their side.

At Cleopatra's feet—It was after the Battle of Pharsalia that Caesar, for a time, fell a victim to the charms of Cleopatra and gave her the kingdom of Egypt in preference to Ptolemy, her brother and husband. *Himself*—in full possession of all his mature greatness.

Stanza 91. Napoleon had one weak and petty passion—vanity.

Came and saw and conquered.—(Grammatically agreeing with 'he' in l. 810.) *Veni, Vedi, Vici*—the celebrated expression used by Caesar to describe his conquest over Pharnaces (king of Pontus) in one day.

But the man—i. e. Napoleon. (Connect with 'was strangely framed' in l. 815) *Would have tamed*—wanted so to tame; wanted so to train and discipline. *Eagles*—standards of the French army; here standing for Napoleon's troops. *But the man framed*—**Expl.** But Napoleon, who wanted so to train his soldiers that they would obey his least wishes like a trained falcon, was yet framed with certain peculiar weaknesses of character.

Down to flee—i. e. to hasten to the attack of the enemy, as the falcon flies down to attack its prey. *In the Gallic van*—in front of the French armies. *A deaf heart*—a heart which would never listen to the inner prompting of his conscience. *A deaf heart itself*—a heart which would never permit him to listen to the still small voice of conscience. *Strangely*—i. e. with strange weaknesses of disposition. *Coquettish in ambition*—with a petty and insatiable ambition. *Still he aimed*—His ambition was never satisfied: he always seemed to be aspiring after something—but after what?

Stanza 92. What was it that he aspired after? Did he not know that all ambition ends in death and was all this deluge of blood necessary to satisfy this empty passion.

Would be all or nothing—Connect with 'still he aimed' in l. 818.—'He was always aspiring and he wanted to be all or nothing.' Either he would be first or he would cease to be. (Cf. the Latin expression 'aut Caesar, aut nullus.')

Nor could he wait.....him—(Mark the bitter sarcasm in this line.) 'If he wanted to be great, why was he in such a hurry

about it ? Why couldn't he wait for the grave which surely would have equalled him with the greatest, would have equalled him with the Caesars—those Caesars upon whose dust we tread ? *The sure.....level him*—that grave which would have levelled him, have equalled him with the greatest.

Had fixed him.....fate—would have equalled him with the Caesars and thus have satisfied his ambition in a way. (What higher ambition can man have than to be the equal of the Caesars ? And if Napoleon had waited a few years, this fate would have been his. How ? viz. through the levelling influence of death. *For this*—viz. thus to be laid low by Death. *For this triumph*—After all, the grave is the inevitable end of all human fate. The conqueror may rear his arch of triumph but the end to which he comes must be this. *For this*—viz. to reach this pitiful goal.

And for this deluge—**Expl.** Blood and tears have flowed in a deluge over this earth. To what end ? Why, only to end in death.

An universal deluge etc.—At the time of Noah's deluge there was at least one *ark* of refuge for man ; but now, in this universal deluge of blood and misery, there seems to be no escape at all for wretched mankind.

Ebbs.....reflow—**Expl.** If there is a temporary cessation in this deluge of blood anon it begins to flow in a mightier volume than before.

Renew thy rainbow, god—A supplication to the deity. 'Ordain that this deluge should cease and that it should not be renewed again.' (In Noah's time, after the end of the flood, god sent the rainbow in token of his covenant with man—as a guarantee that the flood should not occur again.)

(4) Stanzas 93 to 98.

The fate of Napoleon suggests some natural reflections on the futility of human life and on the strange accident that those who conquer tyrants should themselves be tyrants.

Stanza 93. What is the good of our life ? Our senses and reason are weak ; truth is unattainable ; and custom and public opinion are omnipotent so much so that men are afraid of their free judgments.

Barren being—fruitless existence. *What from.....reap*—

What reward, what happiness do we gain from this existence of ours? seeing that our powers are so feeble and circumstances so bad. *Narrow*—inadequate. *Which loves the deep*—that remains secret and hidden. (Cf. the proverbial expression: 'Truth dwells at the bottom of a well.') *Weighed.....scale*—judged, not on their own merits, but by the false standard of public opinion. *Custom*—in the sense of 'conventional, commonly established ideas of right and wrong.' *Opinion*—same as custom, convention. *Our senses narrow etc*—This passage is almost a literal translation of Cicero's magnificent Latin: '*augustos sensus, imbecilles animos, brevia curricula vitae*'

Whose veil.....light—**Expl.** Custom and convention are so strong, they have cast such a veil of ignorance upon men's minds that people have forgotten all true standards of right and wrong and have become almost afraid lest their reason should be too strong, lest they should perceive and understand things which other people don't.

Mantles.....darkness—casts a thick pall of ignorance upon the earth. *Are accidents*—seem to lose their eternal and immutable character. (Under the influence of false convention, people do not judge things as *right or wrong* on their merits; rather, right and wrong seem to be accidental and variable qualities in their estimation.) *Grow pale*—are frightened. *Grow pale..... bright*—are frightened lest their reason should prove too strong. (N. B People are so much under the influence of convention that they are almost afraid to have a free jndgment of their own.)

Free thought—thought and judgment which differs from the common opinion of the world. *Earth...light*—**N. B.** Of course, there can be no such thing as too much light, too much knowledge; the more light, the better. Yet people are so accustomed to the darkness of convention that they are almost afraid of light.

Stanza 94. People tread contentedly the petty round of their lives and bequeath the heritage of their servitude to succeeding generations.

Thus—viz. in slugglish misery *Plod*—follow the petty routine of their lives. *Sluggish misery*—dull and life-less misery. *Rotting*—contented enough with their miserable existence. *From sire.....son*—i. e. from generation to generation. *And thus..... age to age*—They seem to be content with their littleness and weakness; and so they follow the same dull routine of their days

from year's end to lear's end, through generation after generation. *Trampled*—oppressed, humiliated. *Proud.....nature*—they seem to be almost proud of the bondage in which they live. *Their hereditary rage*—the legacy of servitude. *Race...slaves*—people who were slaves from birth, as it were.

Bequeathed.....slaves—These people are not only slaves themselves, they bequeath the legacy of slavery to their children. *Who*—viz. these children of theirs. *Wage.....chains*—fight in defence of their very servitude, as if that were a thing to be proud of.

Bleed gladiator-like etc.—**Expl.** Just as gladiators know the fate that awaits them and yet go on fighting in the circus, so these people know that slavery is their only portion and yet fight in defence of their bondage.

Gladiators—These were hired ruffians of the Roman circus who made it their profession to fight with wild beasts or with other gladiators just as the case might be. *The same arena*—i.e. the ring of the circus. *Engage*—go forth to fight.

Stanza 95. The slavery of which we speak is not simply religious tyranny in matters of opinion but that political servitude which bows us doubly down.

N. B. In the preceding stanza Byron has said that men are content to dwell for ever in a state of servitude ; and here he explains what particular kind of servitude he refers to Of course, in religious matters, people are content to live in the bondage of accepted opinions. But Byron is speaking here, not of this spiritual bondage, but of that political tyranny which was making itself widely felt at this time in Europe.

There had been a reaction in the direction of absolute government since the days of the French revolution ; and to this Byron refers here.

Of men's creeds—of the bondage of religion. *They rest..... maker*—**Expl.** In matters of religion people willingly submit to certain restraints. But that is a matter which lies entirely between man and his Maker and I have nothing to do with that.

Things allowed—things which are admitted by every body *Averred*—i.e. openly proclaimed. *The yoke*—viz. the bondage of political servitude.

I speak not.....doubly bowed—**Construe** thus :—"I am not

speaking of man's creeds : rather I am speaking of a matter which is known to everybody, viz. of that political servitude which crushes us down with its intolerable weight." (*Yoke* is the object of *speak* and agrees with *things* in l. 848. *Intent* in l. 851 and *edict* in l. 852 are in apposition with *yoke*)

That is.....bowed—that thrall of political bondage which oppresses us with its intolerable burden. *The intent.....avowed*—the avowed, proclaimed object of all tyrants. *The edict... ..rules* the decree of those who are severeigns of the world.

Who are grown.....throne—These sovereigns have taken a leaf out of Napoleon's book—that Napoleon who almost pulled them down from their thrones. (Napoleon was a despot and the sovereigns of Europe are now seeking to ape Napoleon.) *Him... proud*—i.e.' Napoleon who once humiliated them all. *Should... slumber*—stir them up from their indolence.

Too glorious.....done—**Expl.** If Napolean had done only this i. e. if he had only humbled the proud and frightened kings on their thrones, then his life would have been exceedingly glorious. (Byron means that if Napoleon had been content to be the enemy of sovereigns and had not tried to be sovereign himself then his life would have been very glorious)

Stanza 96. Napoleon conquered tyrants but ended by being a tyrant himself. From this the poet wonders if it is impossible for Europe to produce patriot like Washington—a patriot who would conquer despotism and yet never aspire to be despot himself.

Can tyrants...be—Is it necessary that those who conquer tyrants themselves should be tyrant ? (The question is suggested by the career of Napoleon.)

Freedom—here meaning not freedom generally but the cause of freedom in Europe (In America freedom came from a selfless champion like Washington. Is it impossible that Europe should produce a man of the same calibre ?)

When she...undefiled—when America, newly born as a state, at once became great and strong. **N. B.** Pallas was the virgin goddess of learning and military prowess among the Greeks ; and the legend about her was that she sprang forth fully armed from the head of Zeus.

Columbia—the United States of America. *When she... Pallas*—when she suddenly came into existence as a great power.

(The reference is to the Declaration of Independence in 1776 by which the American colonies proclaimed their independence of Great Britain.

A pallas...undefiled—The comparison with Pallas is thus made out :—(1) Pallas sprang forth fully armed and so America became a great power the very day she was born. (2) Pallas was a virgin undefiled and so America never had to bear the stain of foreign servitude.

Must such minds.....Washington—**Expl.** Or is it that men like Washington can never be born in the civilized soil of Europe ? They can be born only deep in the midst of virgin forests and amid the roar of cataracts.

Unpruned forest—i.e. virgin forest, untouched by the hand of men. *Wild.....forest*—referring to the fact that America was a virgin country in a state of primitive wildness when Washington was born.

Has earth.....shore—**Expl.** Is it that the very principle which could give birth to such men has become extinct in the world ? or is it that the seed is there but that it can not grow on the soil of Europe ? (Has earth itself lost the power of producing such great men ? or is it Europe only that has lost that power ? *No such shore*—no country which can produce such great men.

Stanza 97. The crimes with which France stained the cause of freedom—they are used by tyrants as a pretext for tightening the bond of servitude.

Got drunk with blood—intoxicated with bloodshed, (maddened by a taste of power.) *To vomit crime*—with the result that she began to indulge in an orgy of crime.

France got drunk etc.—**N.B.** What the poet means to say is this :—The people of France had long been oppressed by kings and nobles. They got their first taste of vengeance in 1789 with the outbreak of the French Revolution ; and this so maddened their blood that they plunged forthwith into an orgy of frightful crimes. And these crimes have been fatal to the cause of freedom in other countries, for they give countenance to the theory that the common people can never use freedom with moderation.

And fatal.....crime—**Expl.** The saturnalia of crime in which France plunged after the outbreak of the French Revolu-

tion has fatally injured the cause of freedom in every country. *Saturnalia*—a period of unbridled license. The Saturnalia was a Roman festival occurring in the month of December, during which the people gave themselves up to an unrestrained pursuit of mirth. *His saturnalia*—the after-math of crime which followed upon France's brief taste of freedom.

The deadly days... ..life's tree—**Explain** the construction thus :—(1) The deadly days which we have seen, (2) the vile ambition of Napoleon (3) the assumption or Imperial sovereignty by Napoleon—these have furnished tyrants with a pretext for screwing tighter the chains of political servitude. *The deadly days*—referring to such frightful incidents as the September massacre of 1792.

Vile ambition.....world—the vile ambition of Napoleon which utterly baffled the hopes of men. N. B. When the French Revolution broke out people had thought that the reign of freedom was now to begin ; but this hope was disappointed by Napoleon's ambition.

His hopes—viz. men's hope of achieving political freedom. *An adamantine wall*—an impassable barrier. *The base pageant etc.*—viz. Napoleon's assumption of royal pomp and power. *Are grown the pretext*—are utilized by tyrants as pretexts.

For the eternal throng—i. e. for keeping up the bondage of slavery. *Which.....tree*—that political servitude which cuts at the very root of life. *And doomes.....fall*—(Connect with 'thrall' in l. 872) ; that political servitude which is the cause of man's second and greatest fall.

N. B. Man's first fall was in the days of Adam when he fell from Paradise ; his second fall is now when he has fallen from hopes of freedom—From the first fall there was hope of salvation but this second fall is worse because it promises to be permanent.

Stanza 98. Yet the ultimate triumph of freedom is sure, her seed has been sown deep even in the soil of the North.

N. B. Freedom has here been compared to three successive images—(1) to the thunder-storm which blows against the wind—(2) to a triumphant voice, (3) to a tree that may have lost its blossom but which still preserves its sap.

Thy banner.....wind—**Expl.** Just as a thunder-storm blows against the general current of the wind and yet prevails, so

the cause of freedom will ultimately prevail inspite of adverse circumstances *Torn*—viz. in conflict with adverse circumstances. *Died*—seemed to fade away. *The loudest.....behind*—Thy voice though broken and dying is still loud, loud like the dying notes of the storm.

N. B. The *banner* of freedom, though torn, is yet flying: the *voice* of freedom, though broken, is still loud: the *tree* of freedom, though it has lost its blossoms, is still lusty and vigorous.

Hath lost blossom—hath lost its early freshness. *Rind*—bark. *Chopped by the axe*—referring to the fact that the cause of freedom has received rude shocks from tyrants. *The sap lasts*—The principle of freedom endures. *The seed.....deep*—The seed of freedom has struck its root deep. *The North*—i. e. the rude and unfertile North. *The seed.....north*—The principle of freedom has fixed itself deep even in the rude soil of England. *So shall...forth*—**Expl.** And since the principle of freedom has been planted firmly, we may naturally expect that more favourable results will follow when circumstances grow more favourable. *Less bitter fruit*—happier results than those which were experienced in France.

(5) Stanzas 99 to 106.

Byron proceeds to notice one by one the chief memorials of ancient Rome. And first he speaks of the stern round tower which serves as the tomb of Metella, wife of Crassus.

Stanza 99. A stern round tower, overgrown with moss and ivy, which, with its fence of stone, can baffle the strength of an army. What treasure is locked up in this fastness?—only a woman's grave.

A stern round tower—This was called Capo da Bove and stood in the Appian way. *Of other days*—a relic of ancient times. *Firm as a fortress etc.*—**N. B.** Byron dwells upon the massive details of the structure in order to contrast them with the slender contents of the building. *Fence of stone*—bulwark of stone. *Such.....delays*—such a fortress as might withstand the onset of an army and delay its advance. *With half etc.*—the other half having crumbled down in the course of time. *With two thousand.....eternity*—covered over with the ivy growth of two thousand years—an ivy-growth which, from its age, might seem like the garland of eternity. *The garland.....overthrown*—

The ivy growing upon the tower is like a garland waving over all those who have died here during these two thousand years. *What.....strength*—What was this strong tower meant for? *Within its cave.....heaved*—What priceless treasure was that which required such a strong tower for its protection.

Stanza 100. The poet muses upon who and what manner of woman the lady might have been. Was she chaste and fair? How did she live? How did she die?

The lady.....palace—This lady who required a palace for her tomb. *Worthy.....bed*—Was she chaste enough to be king's wife? Nay more, was she chaste enough to be a Roman's wife? (Mark the implied assumption that a Roman was greater than a King). *What daughter.....hair*—Had she any daughter who inherited her beauty? *So honoured—honoured* by being buried in a palace. *Was she...honoured*—Connect with 'to commemorate' in l. 900. 'Was she not thus honoured in order to celebrate a fate which must have been more than mortal?' *Conspicuously placed*—'Was she not placed conspicuously in a spot where the relics of other persons could never be buried, in order to commemorate etc?' *Meaner relics*—that is, the corpses of meaner persons. *Must not.....rot*—i, e. must not presume to be buried.

Stanza 101. (Same strain of thought continued). Was she light and frivolous? Or was she virtuous and stern?

Who love.....lords—who are faithful to their husbands. *The lords of others*—husbands of other women. *Such*—that is women of the latter class; unchaste and unfaithful wives. *Even in the older time*—i. e. even in the simple and virtuous days of the republic. *A matron.....mien*—a sober and virtuous matron like Cornelia. *Cornelia*—daughter of Scipio Africanus and more famous still as the mother of the Gracchi. *Or the light air etc.*—i. e. was she of the light air etc. *Or the light air.....queen*—or was she frivolous and light-hearted like Cleopatra. *Profuse of joy*—prodigal of her favours. *Inveterate in virtue*—firmly fixed in virtue's ways. *Against it.....virtue*—Was she a light-o'-love like Cleopatra? Or did she set her countenance against all such vices? *Did she.....heart*—was she prone to fall in love? *Or wisely.....grief*—or did she, like a wise woman, shut out love from her heart and thus save herself from a world of sorrows? *Affections*—in the general sense of feelings, passions. N. B.

All the affections are griefs, i. e. are sources of trouble and misery.

Stanza 102. Perchance she died in youth, bowed down beneath the load of premature misery.

N. B. Students will notice that in the latter part of this stanza the characteristic symptoms of consumption—for instance a hectic flush upon the cheek—have been skilfully idealised by the poet. The lady, Byron seems to imply, died of consumption—consumption induced by premature sorrow.

It may be.....death—**Explain** the construction thus :—'Bowed down by the heavy load of sorrow, a cloud might gather over her beauty and a gloom in her dark eye—a gloom which would be an index of that early death which heaven gives its favourites'. *Bowed*—crushed down. *Woes.....gentle dust*—sorrows far heavier than even the heavy tomb which has been raised over her grave. (Mark the contrast between 'ponderous tomb' and 'gentle dust'. The poet seems to imply that the tomb was too heavy for such a gentle creature as she was.)

A cloud—a dark shadow might fall upon her beauty. *A gloom.....eye*—a dark cloud of melancholy might gather in her eye. *Doom*—connect with 'early death' in the next line. *Doom favourite*—alluding to the Greek proverb 'those whom the Gods love die early.'

Yet shed etc—connect with 'gloom' and 'cloud' in the preceding lines. 'The cloud gathering over her beauty and the gloom in her eye would yet shed a sunset charm about her.' *Yet shed around her*—would make her beautiful with the hues of approaching death ; would bathe her in the atmosphere of dying day. *And illume etc*—Connect with 'gloom' and 'cloud.' The cloud and gloom would shed a sunset charm etc.

And illume.....leaf-like red—**Explain** the construction thus :—'would illume the autumnal red of her consuming cheek with poetic light and thus make it like the Hesperus of the dead —Stripped of metephor, the passage means—'The hectic flush of consumption burning on her cheek will give it a tinge like that of autumnal leaves—will make it shine like the Hesperus of the dead.' **N. B.** Hesperus is the evening star and is thus associated with ideas of night-fall and darkness, hence death. ' Autumn also suggests similar ideas of decay and death.

Hectic light—the unhealthy flush which is frequently seen on the face of consumptive patients. *Of the dead*—'of the region of the dead.' Tozer. *The Hesperus of the dead*—her hectic cheek would shine like Hesperus and thus light up the way to death. *Her consuming cheek*—her cheek wasting away with consumption. *Consuming* is apparently transitive but the sense is most decisively intransitive. *The autumnal.....red*—the reddish tinge that Autmn imparts to leaves.

Stanza 103. Perhaps she died in extreme old age outliving love and beauty. In any case conjecture as to her fate is useless

Surviving all—i. e. surviving everything. *Charms*—personal beaut,. *With the silver gray tresses*—with her black hair gradually growing gray. *Which might.....Rome*—**Expl.** But this hair, gray as it was, might yet recall memories of the day when her hair was long and dark and when she was envied and praised as one of the beauties of Rome.

Still a something etc—i. e. faint memories of her youth. *They*—tresses. *Braided*—plaited and ornamented. *Array*—dress, make-up. *Eyed*—gazed upon with admiration. *Whether stray*—What is the use of losing myself in a sea of wild conjectures? *We know*—know for certain. *The wealthiest Roman etc*—Crassus, husband of Metella, was the wealthiest Roman of his time and formed the first triumvirate with Cæsar and Pompey. *His love.....pride*—this tomb, which is the monument either of his love or of his pride.

Stanza 104. As I stand here, by the tomb of Metella, the memory of the past comes back to my mind with recollected music.

N. B. Students will notice that this and the following stanza, though grammatically distinct, are closely united in thought. *By thee*—viz. by this tomb. *It seems.....known*—It seems as if I had been personally acquainted with Metella herself.

Other days.....on me—The memory of the past comes back to my mind. **N. B.** So far the meaning is clear; but the question is 'whose past'? Byron's or Metella's? Mr. Tozer seems to think that it is of the latter, but in that case the connection with the next stanza would be missing. I therefore take it that Byron is referring to his own past.

Other days.....music—The memory of the past comes back to my mind steeped in the delicious beauty of remembrance.

Though the tone.....wind—The metaphor of music is kept up.—**Expl.** thus :—The beauty of past days has changed in character ; it has become solemn and sombre like the muttering of distant thunder. (The past had one kind of beauty when it actually *was* ; but now, when its memory comes back to my mind its beauty has become changed in quality)

The cloudy groan etc.—the rumbling of thunder issuing from distant clouds.

Yet.....mind—**Expl.** But though the music of the past has changed in quality yet I could continue seated by this ivy-covered stone till I had given body and shape to the fancies of my heated mind, till I had called up forms from the floating wreck of time. (In other words, I could continue sitting and musing here till I had called back the shapes and forms of the past vividly to the mind)

N. B. The student will notice that the poet develops this thought in the next stanza. I could call back the past, he has said ; and then he goes on to say : 'No doubt that past was a failure ; but sitting here, by this tomb, I sometimes fancy that I could pick up the scattered planks of my ship-wrecked life and build a new bark for myself.

Stanza 105. No doubt I made a shipwreck of my life in youth , but sitting here, it seems to me that I could pick up a few planks from that wreck and build the vessel of my life anew. And yet, if I could do so, whither could I steer this bark, seeing that I have neither hope nor home ?

The planks—the planks of my ship-wrecked life *Far shattered rock*—The image is derived from a ship foundered upon rocks.—My life has been wrecked, says the poet ; but some few planks have survived the general wreck. *Built me a little bark etc*—connect with 'had bodied forth' in l. 935. Thus the construction of the whole passage would be · 'I could seat me by the ivy-ed stone—1. till I had bodied forth etc, 2. till I had called up forms from the floating wrecks, 3. till I had built me a little bark etc.

And from the planks...ever dear—**Expl** From the scattered planks of my past life, I could have built myself a new ship of hope—a ship which should once more enable me to battle with the ocean and the breakers—those breakers that rush upon the shore where all things dear to me lie dead. Divested of metaphor,

the passage means :—Sitting here I sometimes muse that I could resume the broken thread of my life and battle once again with the adverse tide of circumstances.

The ocean, the shocks etc—standing for the adverse circumstances of life. *Ceaseless roar*—viz. of the breakers. *Foundered*—wrecked. *Where all.....dear*—referring to the loss of his friends and relatives.

But could I etc—**N. B.** Here a new doubt presents itself before the mind of the poet. 'I think that I could resume the broken thread of my life ; but could I do so, in which direction would I steer the ship of my life ?'

Could I gather—i.e. even if I could gather. *The wave-worn store*—viz. of planks. *Enough.....boat*—a sufficient number of planks to make a boat for me. *Where.....steer*—In which direction would I direct the course of the new boat ? *Woos*—i.e. invites me, courts me. *No home.. ...here*—I have no other home, no settled course of life, save what I can make for myself here.

Stanzas 106—109.

The ruins of the Palatine and reflexions suggested by these.

Stanza 106. In the failing twilight I hear the owls hooting over the ruins of the Palatine. Amidst such desolation as this, what are my petty griefs and woes ?

Then—seeing that I have neither hope nor home etc. *Let the winds howl on*—My life being desolate I shall find pleasure even in the howling of the winds. *Their harmony*—or rather disharmony. *Shall.....music*—because it will accord with the temper of my mind.

And the night.....cry—Night will temper the howling of the winds with the cry of owlets. *Temper*—mingle. *As I now hear them*—This marks the time and place of the poet's composition. He is writing from the top of Palatine and in the fading twilight of the evening. *O'er.....site*—in the very place where the owls build their nests. (Evidently the Palatine hill was a favourite roosting place of owls.) *The bird of darkness*—the owl.

Answering each other—a peculiarity of owls ; if one bird hoots, the other birds will hoot in reply. *The Palatine*—the hill where Augustus and succeeding Caesars had their palaces

Sailing pinions—wings broad like sails. *Such a shrine*—a memorial of such vast desolation as this. *Upon such.....griefs*—What are our petty personal sorrows in comparison with the wide desolation of which the Palatine is witness? *Let me.....mine*—let me not recount my personal sorrows here.

Stanza 107. Arches crushed, columns strewn in fragments, frescos eaten by damp—these are the only remains of the imperial Mount.

Cypress and Ivy—plants growing amongst the ruins of the Palatine Hill. (The cypress also is associated with funerals.) *Grown*—Connect with 'matted and massed' i.e. growing matted and massed. *Matted*—entangled. *Hillocks.....chambers*—rocks piled up where chambers had been before.

Arch crushed—Triumphal arches were among the most notable architectural features of ancient Rome. *Strewn in fragments*—broken and scattered in pieces. *Choked up vaults*—under-ground chambers choked up with the growth of weeds. *Frescos*—paintings on walls. *Steeped.....damp*—eaten up by damp and mildew.

Subterranean damp—the damp in that is found in under-ground chambers. (Of course these chambers were not originally under the ground; but they tumbled into ruin long ages ago and new houses and buildings have been erected on the roofs of the old.) *Temples, baths etc.*—These ancient buildings are now so much in ruin that their very identity is uncertain. Who can say what they were, whether they were temples, baths or halls?

Learning—here in the sense of investigation by learned men. *All that.....walls*—The only conclusion to which learned men have come as the result of their investigation is that these ruins had once been halls. *The Imperial Mount*—so called because Augustus and the succeeding Caesars had their places of residence upon this hill.

It is thus.....falls—such is the ruin which overtakes even those who are great.

Stanza 108. First *Freedom*, then *splendour*, then *the corruption of splendour*, and lastly the irruption of *barbarism*—such is the course of all human history.

There...tales—The moral of the Palatine is the moral of all human histories; in other words, all human history is uniform in

its course. *It is.....past*—The same tale is uniformly repeated in all the histories of mankind. **N. B.** Byron is referring to the uniform course of development through which all human states have passed and he is thinking specially of the histories of Rome and Greece.—Both in Rome and Greece, we have *first* a period of struggle for freedom; *then* a period of assured severeignty and power; *next* a period when power naturally brings with it inevitable corruption; and *lastly* the period when corruption breeds decay and decay leads to subjection at the hands of others.

First freedom—i.e. struggle for freedom. *Then glory*—i.e. the glory of assured power and sovereignty.

Wealth, vice, corruption—These would represent the third stage in the development of nations and states. *Barbarism at last*—i.e. invasion by barbarians. (In Greece it was invasion by the Romans themselves, whereas in Rome it was invasion by the Goths and Huns.)

With.....vast—inspite of the many volumes which she has written. *Hath but one page*—i.e. has but one moral to preach. *And history.....page*—There are many volumes of history but the moral of all is the same. *It is.....here*—and that moral is vividly illustrated here in the ruins which crown the Palatine Hill. *Where gorgeous tyranny.....ask*—The construction is left purposely incomplete. The poet means:—Gorgeous tyranny hath here gathered together all that the heart, soul and sense could seek; and yet, what has been the result of it all? They all have hastened to one common sink of ruin and decay. *Gorgeous Tyranny*—the splendid despots of ancient Rome (referring to the Roman Emperors.)

Treasures—i.e. treasures of art. *All delights*—things which could delight the mind and the senses both. *Eye or ear*—representing the senses. *Heart, soul*—standing for the mind. *Away with words*—Let there be truce to words, for words are inadequate to paint the vastness of this ruin.

Stanza 109. This mountain is an epitome of ages and realms, But where are the golden palaces which once stood on this hill? Where are the men who dwell in those palaces?

Exult—rejoice, viz. at the manifestation of human greatness that is visible here. (Rejoice that man could have produced

such stupendous works of art.) *Admire*—admire the vastness of power which could have produced the same. *Despise*—because all this power was unable to save these things from ruin.

Thou pendulum.....tear—you who oscillate constantly between joy and grief. *Ages and realms*—i.e. histories of many ages and many countries. *Are crowded*—are packed within a narrow space. *This span*—connect with 'this mountain' in the line below. *This span*—i.e. this hand's breadth of ground, referring to the Palatine Mount.

Whose obliterated plan—the very groundwork of which cannot now be discovered. (We must bear in mind that the Roman hills did not always possess the shape in which we see them now. They were cut away, levelled and otherwise altered to make them suit the purpose of the city-builders.)

Ages and realms.....filled—**Expl.** the construction thus: The histories of many ages and countries are crowded together in this small strip of land, this mountain, which once was pinnacled by the pyramid of empires—a pyramid which used to shine in the van of glory's gewgaws, so much so that the rays of the sun seemed to derive additional lustre from it. (The pyramid of empires once pinnacled this mountain; in other words, this mountain was once the apex of the ancient Roman world—that Roman world which itself shone in the van of glory and splendour.) *This mountain...pinnacle*—This mountain, the very ground-plan of which cannot now be accurately traced, was once crowned by the pyramid of empires; in other words, it formed the crown and summit of the ancient Roman Empire.

Of glory's.....van—(Connect with 'pyramid of empire' in the preceding line.) That pyramid of empires—that Roman Empire—which itself shone in the van of glory's gewgaws viz. was the most gorgeous and brilliant thing in the ancient world. *Till the sun's rays.....filled*—which was so gorgeous and brilliant that the sun itself seemed to gain additional brilliancy from its lustre. *Where...roofs*—where are the splendid mansions which once stood upon this hill? *Golden roof*—referring specially to Nero's golden palace.

(7) Stanzas 110 to 114.

Other memorials of Rome's ancient greatness.

Stanza 110. Even Cicero was not so eloquent as these nameless pillars

which preach the vanity of all human things. These columns and arches that I see around me—were they the arches of Titus or the columns of Trajan? No, they are all monuments of the omnipotence of time.

Tully—Cicero, the greatest orator of ancient Rome. *Nameless column*—It has since been discovered that this column was dedicated to the Emperor Phocas. *With the buried base*—The base (pedestal) is no longer buried : it has been excavated since Byron's time. *Tully was not so eloquent etc.*—you are eloquent because you are nameless. The very fact that you are nameless eloquently preaches the mortality of all human things.

The laurels.....brow—One of the honours granted to Caesar was that he might perpetually wear a wreath of laurels. *What are the laurels.....dwelling place*—**Expl.** I care not for the triumps of Caesar. To me the ivy that grows here, in the ruined palace of the Caesars, has a deeper lesson and significance. *Ivy from his dwelling place*—the ivy that grows on the ruins of his dwelling place. *Crown me with ivy etc.*—because this ivy will teach me more of the nothingness of all human ambition.

3 *Whose arch or pillar* **N. B.** The passage that follows is rhetorical both in sense and structure. The poet sees before him the triumphal arches and pillars of ancient Rome ; and then he says that these arches and pillars prove, not the greatness of the ancient Roman Emperors, but rather the omnipotent influence of time. ('These pillars and arches purport to be memorials of the Roman Emperors. To me, however, it is plain that they are all monuments raised in honour of the destructive power of time.') *Titus*—The arch of Titus was erected to commemorate the fall of Jerusalem in 79 A. D.

Trajan's—Trajan also had an arch in his honour, perhaps the most beautiful in ancient Rome ; but it is rather of his pillar that the poet is thinking. This pillar was erected in A. D. 114 to commemorate the many victories of Trajan. *It is that of time*—**Expl.** These arches and pillars were raised to honour the memory of the ancient emperors and to celebrate their triumphs. But they are all in ruins and their decay speaks eloquently only of the all-destructive power of time.

He—i. e. Time. *All he.....scoffing*—he destroys them all with contempt and mockery. *Apostolic statues.....urn*—Statues of the Christian apostles have been erected upon the summit of these ancient columns. 'The statue of St. Peter stands on the

column of Trajan and the statue of Paul stands on the pillar of Marcus Aurelius.) *To crush*—i. e. to trample upon ; (so called because these statues had been erected on the top of the Imperial columns.) *The Imperial urn whose ashes etc.*—The student will notice that the sentence overflows into the next stanza and cannot be understood except with reference to that. Trajan's column was formerly crowned by a statue of the Emperor. There was a globe in one arm of the statue and it was supposed that this globe contained his ashes. (Byron is evidently thinking of this legend.)

Apostolic statues.....stars. **Expl.** Statues of apostles have been erected upon the urns where formerly slept the ashes of Emperors—ashes which, thus buried, reposed beneath the blue sky of Rome. (N. B. The idea is certainly confused and by no means accurate.)

Stanza III. Tranjan's state was worthy to dwell with the sky and stars :—he was more than a mere conqueier like Alexander. He wore his virtues unsullied with house-hold blood.

Buried in air etc.—The reference is to the legend given above viz. that the ashes of Trajan were contained in the globe which was held in one arm of the statue.

They had contained.....home—**Expl.** These ashes contained a spirit which was so free and great that it was worthy to find a home with the free sky and stars. *They*—viz. ashes. *Spirit*—referring to the spirit of Trajan. *With these*—viz. the air, sky and stars of Rome. *Would find a home*—viz. was worthy to find a home. *The last of those etc.*—Connect with 'spirit' in the preceding line 'Trajan was the last of those who reigned over the whole earth'—meaning of course the whole civilised world as known to the ancients. *For after.....conquests*—Trajan was the last who reigned over the whole earth; for those who succeeded him could not retain but rather gave back some of his conquests. *For after*—i. e. after Trajan *Yield back his conquests*—Trajan added the provinces of Dacia and Parthia to the Roman Empire, but the latter was given up immediately after his death. *A mere Alexander*—i. e. a mere conquerer like Alexander without any great human virtues.

Unstained.....virtues—Unlike Alexander he wore his crown of sovereign virtues unsullied by crime. *Unstained.....wine*—The reference is to the darkest vices of Alexander's character

viz. (1) his drunkenness and (2) the murder of his friend Clitus under the influence of wine. *Serenely*—with calm equanimity. *Sovereign virtues*—the supreme virtues of his character. *Still*—even now.

Stanza 112. Where is the Capitoline Hill and the Tarpeian rock? And is that the Forum which once burnt with the eloquence of Cicero?

The rock of triumph—The Capitoline Hill where stood the great triple temple in honour of Jupiter, Minerva and Mars; called rock of triumph because victorious generals, when granted a triumph, used to climb up this hill in order to pay homage at the temple. *Embraced her heroes*—welcomed her heroes, honoured them suitably. *The steep Tarpeian*—the rock from which traitors were hurled into the gulf below in order to meet their death. *Fittest goal.....race*—where traitors got the fittest reward for their career of crime.

The promontory etc—Byron is thinking of the Leucadian cape in Greece from which Sappho leapt down into the Sea.

The promontory.....ambition—the projecting rock from which traitors leapt down and thus had their ambition cured. *Here*—viz. in this great temple of Jupiter. *Their spoils*—the spoils which they gathered in conquered countries. *Yon field below*—referring to the Forum Romanum, the great Roman Forum, which is imperishably associated with all the chief events of Roman history. *Yon field*—the Forum immediately to the East of the Capitol and to the Palatine. It was a narrow, irregular stretch of ground originally so low that it used to be flooded during the rains.

Thousand years.....sleep—**Expl.** A thousand years of party strife and domestic conflict lie buried in that narrow stretch of land. (Roman history, at least during the earlier years of the Republic, was one continual struggle between two rival parties, the Plebians and the Patricians).

The Forum.....glow—The Forum was the political centre of Rome and thus the scene of Rome's greatest oratorical achievements. ('The immortal accents of the great orators seem still to be vibrating in the atmosphere of the Forum.') *And still... Cicero*—Even now, at this distant date, the very atmosphere of the place seems to be quivering with the eloquence of Cicero. *Eloquent air*—Of course it is not the air that is eloquent; but

it seems to have caught an eloquent glow from the speeches of great orators.

Stanza 113. This Forum was the arena of all Roman history from the first infant days of the Republic till the time when Rome had risen to be the mistress of the world; but freedom had become extinct in Rome long before this latter date.

The field.....blood—Byron is still harping upon the subject of the Forum. The Forum, he says, was the arena of all the chief incidents of Roman history; it was the scene of all her battles for freedom; the scene of all her faction-fights, the scene of many glories and the scene of many evil and bloody deeds.

Field of freedom—referring specially to the controversy between the Plebians and the Patricians through which Rome slowly won her way to freedom. *Field of faction*—referring specially to such civil wars as those between Sulla and Marius.

Field of fame—referring to the fact that in Rome fame was most quickly won through oratory and the Forum was the chief field of oratory *Field of blood*—referring to the many massacres which had stained this building with blood.

Here a proud people's.....failed—**Expl.** From the first, infant days of the Republic till the time when Rome came to be the mistresss of the world it was in this Forum that the passions of a proud people chiefly manifested themselves.

Were exhaled—were breathed; chiefly manifested. *Empire in the bud*—nascent, growing empire. *From the first etc.*—i e. from the early days of the Republic. *When further worlds failed*—when she had no further worlds to conquer; in other words, when she had conquered all that could be conquered. *Long before*—i. e. long before this latter date. *Had Freedom's face.....veiled*—Freedom had been lost in Rome long before this date. (Byron means to imply that the Romans lost their political freedom with the establishment of the Empire) *Anarchy*—referring to the despotism of the Caesars. *Anarchy.....attributes*—Despotism had usurped the attributes of freedom. *Till every lawless soldier etc*—till every successful soldier was free to be Emperor and in that capacity either trampled upon the servile Senate or caused her orators to pronounce eulogies in his favour.

Every lawless soldier—referring to the fact that the Military soon became supreme in the Roman Empire, and it was the Pretorian guard which really selected and deposed Emperors at

its will. *Who assailed*—who proved aggressive ; who succeeded in making himself Emperor. *Trod.....mutes*—trampled upon the Senate, made the Senate entirely subservient to his will. *Trembling Senate*—Even in the worst days of Imperial despotism the Senate continued to exist ; but, of course, it was the shadow of its former self. *Or raised... ..prostitutes*—The Emperors either reduced the Senate to silence ; or if any of these Senators spoke at all, they were only hired orators who had been bribed to do so. *Raised*—i. e. caused to be raised. *Venal*—bribed. *Prostitutes*—here in the sense of people who prostituted their talents, used them for evil purposes. (The poet is referring to hired orators and members in the Senate)

Stanza 114. Let us quit the subject of the Forum with the name of Rienzi, the last of the Romans. So long as there is one leaf on the tree of Freedom, it will furnish a garland for Rienzi, who was Rome's last law giver, - her new-born Numa

Then turn we—**N. B.** Byron is preparing to leave the subject of the Forum and he manages the transition by reference to Rienzi whom he calls the last of the Romans. *The latest Tribune*—See note on Rienzi below. (In ancient Rome the Tribunes were in a special way the representatives of the Plebs and in that capacity were invested with considerable power) *Ten thousand tyrants*—referring to the long succession of despotic sovereigns who ruled over Rome *Redeemer.....shame*—you who made up for her many centuries of disgrace and humiliation.

Rienzi last of Romans—Cola de Rienzi (1313-1354) was a man of humble birth ; but from boyhood he was filled with dreams of restoring Rome to her ancient greatness. In 1347 he placed himself at the head of the popular movement which overthrew the power of the oligarchy and elected himself Tribune, but his rule did not last long. He was deposed the very same year and though he returned to power again in 1354, he was again overthrown and murdered

Last of Romans—so called because of his noble patriotism *Friend of Petrarch*—One of the finest of Petrarch's odes is addressed to Rienzi. *While the tree.....leaf*—So long as there is one leaf on the tree of freedom, let it furnish a wreath of honour for your grave.

The forum's champion—you who were the hero of the Forum. (It was Rienzi's fascinating eloquence which enabled him to bring

over the populace to his side.—But Byron makes a mistake, perhaps intentionally, in making the Forum the scene of Rienzi's oratorical triumph. The popular assembly which Rienzi addressed and which elected him Tribune met on the Capitoline Hill and not in the Forum.)

New born Numa...Numa Pompilius, second King of Rome, was the first law-giver of the city; and these laws were said to have been communicated to him by the wood-nymph, Egeria, who is supposed to have fallen in love with him. *Her new born Numa*—As Numa was the ancient law-giver of Rome so you were her law-giver in your time.

(8) Stanzas 115 to 119.

An episode which places round the beautiful story of Numa and Egeria.

Stanza 115. Addressing Egeria, the poet says, perhaps you never existed; perhaps you were only the creation of a heated brain; but in any case you represent a most beautiful conception.

Sweet creation.....breast—perhaps you were conceived by some poet who found no rest in the love of any mortal woman, *Some heart*—some poetic and creative heart. *Which found..... breast*—who was disappointed with the beauties of this earth; who found no rest, no repose in the love of mortal women and thus was induced to call up an ideal and imaginary figure like yourself.

As thine ideal breast—as the affection of an imaginary being like yourself. *Whatever thou.....wert*—whether you were real or mere imaginary. *A young Aurora.....air*—a young and beautiful creature of the imagination. (Just as the Aurora is a beautiful image, a beautiful trick of vision, so you perhaps were wholly an imaginary being)

Nympholepsy—delusion, hallucination. (People who laboured under hallucination were supposed in ancient times to be under the influence of nymphs.) *The nympholepsy.....despair*—perhaps you never existed; perhaps you were only a delusion of the heated brain of a disappointed lover. *Fond despair*—foolish and despairing person. *Or.... .earth*—or perhaps you were an actual person of flesh and blood.

Who found.....adoring—or perhaps you were a real woman who found an all-enthusiastic worshipper in this world. *More*

than common votary—an admirer with more than common enthusiasm. *Too much adoring*—a votary who admired you so much as to raise you to the category of a nymph. *Whatsoever thy birth*—i. e. whether you were a nymph or a mortal. *Softly bodied forth*—most tenderly and gracefully imagined

Stanza 116. Art's works do not deface thy fountain : and its mosses are still green as if watered by thy Elysian drops.

Thy fountain etc—Outside the southern gate of Rome there was a valley and a fountain dedicated to Egeria and the poet is speaking of that fountain here. *Mosses of thy fountain*—the mosses which grow round the spring dedicated to thy name. *Are sprinkled drops*—Drops from the fountain bearing thy name are still showered upon these mosses and so keep them green.

The face.....Art's works—**N B.** Statues and artificial basins of stone must once have stood in this place ; but they had naturally decayed with time and no traces of them were now to be found ; hence the present remarks.

The face.....works—**Explain** the construction thus :—The face of thy cave-guarded spring, a spring whose green margin is no longer defaced by Art's works, reflects the genius of the place ;—in other words, the smooth and placid bosom of the spring catches and reflects the very atmosphere of the place. *Thy cave-guarded spring*—a fountain which springs within thy grotto. *With years unwrinkled*—a fountain which, unlike the handi-work of man, does not bear any trace of the passage of time. (Byron again refers to this particular feature in his address to the Ocean.)

Reflects.....place—reflects the meek and gentle atmosphere of the place. *Whose green, wild margin*—connect with 'spring' in l. 1038. *Now.....art's works*—are no longer defaced by the presence of artificial works.

Nor must.....marble—and the pure and gentle waters are no longer imprisoned within the confines of any marble basin. **N. B.** There is a *comma* after marble in most of the texts but the comma must be changed to a *semi-colon.*

Cleft statue—There is a mutilated statue within the grotto where the fountain rises ; and it has been suggested that this was the statue of Egeria. *The rill runs over*—the fountain overflows into a sort of streamlet.

Stanza 117. Nature is beautiful and refreshing on thy account here.

Fantastically tangled—mingled together in picturesque confusion. (Connect with 'creep' in the preceding stanza, the whole passage meaning—'Fern, flowers etc grow together mingled in inextricable confusion here') *The green hill.....blossoms*—as if all due to the influence of thy genius.

Rustles—makes a murmuring sound as it rushes through. *Sing welcome etc*—their song is a tribute to your genius as it were. *Fresh in hue*—beautiful in colour. *Implore.....step*—as if entreat the traveller to stop and admire them *In a fairy mass*—in a mass of glowing beauty.

The sweetness.....skies—The violet is deep blue in colour and here it seems as if it has caught this blue from the blue of the skies. (It seems as if the skies have lent their blue to the sweet eye of the violet.)

Stanza 118. It was in this beautiful recess that you lived and met your lover.

In this enchanted cave—in this recess of heavenly beauty. *Thy bosom.....lover*—Here you dwelt and here you waited in tender and breathless silence for the distant approach of your human lover. *Thy all-heavenly.....lover*—Goddess as you were, your bosom beat with anxious expectation as you awaited the approach of your mortal lover.

Thy mortal lover—Numa, who, king as he was, was yet but a man. *Purple midnight*—the warm star-lit midnight. *The midnight.....canopy*—the midnight with its star-spangled sky enclosed that meeting. *Befell*—happened *This cave.....oracle*—**Expl.** This cave must have been meant for an enamoured goddess to greet her lover ; it must have been intended to be a cell haunted by holy love ; it must have been, it was, our earliest oracle.

Enamoured goddess—a love-sick goddess such as you were. *The greeting.....goddess*—the greeting which an enamoured goddes could give to her mortal lover. *The cell etc.*—i.e. must have been shaped out for this special purpose viz. to be the haunted etc. *Earliest oracle*—so called because just as in after times men came to oracles in order to learn wisdom from inspired priestesses so here Numa came to learn wisdom from you.

Stanza 119. Since you loved a mortal, could you not impart an immortal element to mortal love, could you not extirpate the root of satiety from earthly passion ?

Thy breast...replying—since your affections responded to his. *To his replying.....heart*—Since you loved a mortal, did you not have something human in your divine heart ? (You were a goddess ; and yet had you not something human in your heart inasmuchas you loved a man ?)

And love.....transports—Earthly love, says the poet, is born in despair and dies in despair. But since you were a goddess did you not enjoy your love with immortal transports i. e. with that rapture of ecstasy which gods must feel. *And Love*—i. e. the love of human beings. *Which dies.....sighing*—which is born in sorrow and dies in despair.

Share with immortal transports—such transports of joy as gods only can feel. *Could thine art etc*—How I wish your art could make them etc. *Could thine art.....cloys*—**N. B.** This, we must understand, is an expression of passionate desire on the part of the poet. 'Our love', he says, 'is mortal and our passion impure ; but since you condescended to share this feeling, could you not impart an element of heavenly purity and heavenly immortality to it ?'

Them—i. e. our feelings of love. *Earthly joys*—the love of mortal beings. *Expel the venom.....dart*—an amplification of the same idea 'Our love', says the poet, 'may be keen ; but it has an element of poison in it ; and could you not expel the poison while retaining the keenness ?'

Venom—i. e. the element of impurity which always mingles with mortal love. *And not blunt*—i. e. yet not blunt. *The dart*—i. e. the keenness of love. *The dull satiety etc*—Mortal love, says the poet, is destroyed, it loses its fervour by a feeling of over-fulness ; but could you not expel this feeling of satiety ? *The deadly weed*—viz. that feeling of dull satiety. *Which cloys*—i. e. which makes us sick of love.

N. B. One of the greatest draw-backs of mortal love, says the poet, is the feeling of satiety which almost invariably accompanies it : but could you not remove this inevitable venom from love ?

(9) Stanzas 120 to 127.

From the story of Egeria and her love for Numa, the poet naturally glances off to moralize on love generally.

Stanza 120 Our affections are either starved or bestowed on unworthy objects; and this latter leads to evil and unwholesome effects.

Our affections.....desert—this is the alternative dilemma with which human love is faced, either it is starved, not bestowed at all, or it is bestowed on unworthy and evil objects.

Run to waste—i. e. are starved. *Water the desert*—i. e. are bestowed on unwholesome objects.

Whence arise but weeds—**N. B.** The metaphor of 'watering the desert' is continued. What happens from this watering of the desert, asks the poet. The result is, not the growth of wholesome vegetation, but the growth of noxious and poisonous weeds. In other words, evil only follows from the bestowal of love upon unworthy objects.

Weeds.....luxuriance—rank and unwholesome plants. 'If you water fertile ground, the result would be wholesome vegetation; but if you water the desert, the result will be weeds of dark luxuriance.' **N. B.** The poet's agricultural botany may be questioned but the meaning is plain.—'If you bestow your love upon proper objects, the result is good; if otherwise, the result is evil.'

Tares of haste—unwholesome plants which are the offspring of haste. *Rank*—offensive unwholesome. *At the core*—in their pith and centre. *Wild*—rank, strong. *Breathe but agonies*—cause acute pain. *Whose gums*—the resin which drops from such trees. **N. B.** Weeds of dark luxuriance, flowers with wild odour, and trees with poisonous gums—all refer to the same thing viz. the evil and unwholesome effects of unworthy love i. e. of passion as distinguished from love. *The world's wilderness*—the barren desert of the world.

Such the plants.....wants—**N. B.** Passion, immoral love is pictured as a creature vainly panting after some celestial fruit, which, however, it is doomed never to reach; and as it flies along, the earth appears to be a desert under its foot. 'Passion flies crouching over the world's wilderness and weeds of dark luxuriance are the plants that blossom under her feet. *Some celestial fruit*—here it would be happiness.

Stanza 121. Love never was, never would be, an inhabitant of this world; it is wholly a product of the mind.

N. B. There is a passionate cynicism underlying this stanza. Love, says the poet, like every other virtue, is wholly a product of man's imagination. It never was and never will be in this world. *No inhabitant of earth*—you do not, you cannot, live in this earth. *An unseen seraph thee*—Just as we believe in God without seeing him so we believe in you without seeing you. *Unseen seraph*—invisible angel.

A faith.....heart—And just as people die as martyrs to their religious faith so people die of broken heart as martyrs to their belief in you. *Never yet hath seen*—Connect with 'naked eye' in the next line ; i. e. the naked eye hath never seen. *As it should be*—as it actually is. *The mind*—viz. the creative imagination. *The mind.....heaven*—Just as the mind of man has peopled heaven with gods and angels, so it is the mind of man that has created you.

Even.....phantasy—and the mind has created you from the excess of its own desires. **N. B.** Though we have imagined your existence it is not because you exist as a matter fact, but because we want you to exist.

To a thought.....soul—**Expl.** You are nothing, you do not exist, and yet the imagination of man has given to this airy nothing such a beautiful shape and image that it haunts for ever our unsatisfied soul.

The thought—i. e. an imaginary nothing like yourself. *Such shape and image*—i. e. such beautiful shape and image. *Unquenched*—i. e. unsatisfied. *Parched, wearied etc*—The heart is withered and wrung with anguish over the subject of love and yet this love is non-existent, it is nothing. *Parched*—dried up, withered. *Wrung*—distorted with anguish. *Riven*—torn in two.

Stanza 122. Just as love is the creation of the mind, so all greatness and all beauty is also the creation of the mind.

N. B. The idea which the poet seeks to develop in this stanza is practically the same as that in the preceding one.—— The mind of man, says the poet, creates beautiful shapes and images and yet this beauty does not exist in nature. It is entirely the outgrowth of man's own mind. To put in philosophical language, beauty, like virtue, according to Byron, is entirely subjective.

Of its.....diseased—The mind catches the infection of its own in-dwelling beauty. *And fevers.....creation*—and under the strong influence of this emotion creates beautiful shapes. *False creation*—so called, because the beauty which it creates does not dwell in nature; it proceeds from man's own heart.

Where.....seized—The poet gives a concrete example in illustration of his point. 'Sculptors produce shapes of exquisite beauty and yet such beauty nowhere exists in this world. Where then does it come from? It comes from their own mind' *Forms*—i. e. the forms of exquisite beauty which the sculptor carves in statues. *Show so fair*—show forms which are equally beautiful *Where are the charms and virtues etc*—**Expl.** Just as the beauty which artists produce does not exist in the actual world, so the virtue which we imagine and picture in our youth—that also does not exist in the world.

Charms—here not in the sense of physical charms but mental and moral charms. *Charms and virtues*—i. e. ideals of virtue and goodness. *The unreached Paradise of our despair*—those ideals of virtue and goodness which are the goal of all our efforts but which we can never hope to reach.

Unreached Paradise.....despair—a Paradise which we could never reach and which, therefore, overwhelms us with despair. *Which over informs.....pen*—The poet is still speaking of the ideals of virtue which we form in our youth. They inspire the poet and artist and yet can never be adequately described or expressed.

Over informs—Connect with Paradise. The meaning is: inspires and proves too much for. *The pencil and the pen*—the pen of the writer and the pencil of the artist. *Overpowers the page*—the same idea is continued. 'Writers seek to describe this ideal in their books but they prove utterly unable to do so.' (The page where it seeks to be described is overpowered by the exceeding brightness of the ideal.)

Stanza 123. Love is madness, but its cure, disenchantment, is bitter still. Such is the fatal spell of love that it then seems most abundant when it is really most scarce.

Who loves, raves—the lover is always a mad man. *Youth's frenzy*—brain-sickness of youth. *The cure is bitterer still*—If love is a disease, the cure of love is worse than love itself *As charm by charm unwinds etc*—**N. B.** How can love be cured

It can be cured only when we perceive that the object of our love is utterly hollow and worthless. And yet this process of cure causes bitter agony to our soul.

As charm by charm.....idols—As one by one each charm drops off from the object of our love and discloses the innate worthlessness of our ideal. **N. B.** When love begins, we invest the object of our love with all sorts of fancied and imaginary charms; but in course of time these charms drop off and the loved one appears in her or his true colours and it is then that the disenchanment of love begins.

Unwinds—drops off. *Idols*—i. e. objects of love. *Too sure* perfectly clearly. *We see.....such*—We then see too clearly that the worth and beauty which we perceived formerly in our object of love dwells only in our mind and does not dwell in that object at all. *From out.....such*—we perceive that neither worth nor beauty dwells outside our own mind.

Yet—inspite of this delusion. *It*—i. e. love. *Still..... spell*—But though we are disillusioned, yet love still continues to exercise its fascinating power. *Reaping the whirlwind.....winds* Though we perceive the utter hollowness of love yet we are tempted by our passion; and under its influence we sow the wind in order to reap the whirlwind.

Reaping.....winds—This is what happens as the result of passion: we commit crimes and derive terrible penalties from them. *Whirlwinds*—viz. the terrible penalty which inevitably follows upon a career of passion. *Oft sown winds*—referring to the deeds of evil which we commit under the influence of passion.

The stubborn heart.....most undone—N. B. The same idea is continued. The working of love is compared to a process of subtle alchemy. Love casts a sort of illusion over the spirit. Under its influence we always seem to be on the verge of happiness though we never reach the goal. *Stubborn*—here in the sense of 'unteachable'; the stubborn heart which will never learn from experience.

Its alchemy begun—when once the subtle operation of love has commenced. *Seems.....prize*—always seems to be on the point of reaching its prize. *Wealthiest when most undone*—Such is the curious delusion which love produces that the heart of man

seems then to be most rich in love when it is most cheated and deceived.

Stanza 124. Our life is miserable. The boon we search for is never found ; this thirst of the heart is never quenched.

N B. Of course what Byron says here refers only to our emotional life ;—We are miserable so far as the life of love is concerned ; but there is a compensation in the love of reason to which the poet will refer in stanza 127. We are wretched when deluded by love, not so when guided by divine wisdom.

Wither—slowly fade away. *We gasp away*—i. e. we sicken and die. *Sick*—viz. sick from disappointed hope. *Unfound... thirst*—love's reward never obtained ; love's desire never satisfied. *In verge of our decay*—i. e. even on the point of death. *Some phantom lures*—we are tempted by some false shadow of happiness. *Doubly curst*—made doubly wretched—wretched because we see the phantom of love, yet more wretched because we see it so late.

Love, fame, ambition etc.—What the poet has said of love he applies to all other objects of human endeavour. 'As we are mocked by love so we are mocked by fame.' *It is the same*—Whatever the object of our love may be—whether it is love or fame or ambition—it is all equally futile and false. *Idle*—found useless, powerless to satisfy us. *None the worst*—i. e. equally bad. *Meteors*—so called because they deceive us with their false show. *And Death...flame*—and Death is the common end of them all. (The metaphor is derived from the fact that formerly meteors were supposed to vanish in smoke—Just as meteors vanish in smoke so love, fame, ambition, they all vanish in Death.)

Stanza 125. We never find the fit object of our love No doubt various accidental causes unite us with other people ; but then a breach with such persons soon occurs. Besides, circumstances are ever our enemies.

N. B. Byron is closely referring in this stanza to the circumstances of his married life. He was united with a person entirely unsympathetic towards him ; for a time this fact was concealed by accident or the strong necessity of loving ; but it soon manifested itself and with miserable results.

Though accident, blind contact etc—There is a gap in the development of the idea. The poet's chain of thought can be thus brought out.—'We never find the true object of our love. No

doubt, we are married; but generally we are married to unsuitable persons. For a time the fact of unsuitability, the fact of natural antipathy between the married couple is concealed by accident or the strong necessity of loving; but the fact soon appears and then the result is miserable. *Blind contact*—casual acquaintance ripening into foolish intimacy.

Have removed—i. e. for a time succeeded in removing. *Antipathies*—the natural unsuitability of the married couple. *But to recur*—but though the antipathies are concealed for a time yet they recur. *Envenomed.....wrong*—Connect with 'antipathies' in the preceding line. When the natural unsuitability between married couple is brought out then a sense of injury mingles with it and embitters it still further. *Envenomed*—poisoned, embittered. *Irrevocable wrong*—a sense of irreparable injury. *And circumstances etc.*—This portion seems to have little to do with the preceding one. It simply means:—circumstances are always unfavourable to us. They seem to precipitate our future evils. *Circumstances*—here used in the sense of chance.

Unspiritual god—so called because it never works with any consciousness or purpose. *Miscreator*—because it mars our plans. *Makes.....evils*—The evils which are bound to come seem to be precipitated by this unlucky god of mischance. *With rod etc.*—Future evils are pictured as being helped along upon the crutches of circumstance—crutches which are shaped like a rod. *Whose touch.....dust*—The touch of circumstances turns hope to dust. In other other words chance so falls out that all our hopes are destroyed, and this, viz. this destruction of hope is the inevitable portion of us all. *We all have trod*—it has been the common fate of us all. (See above.)

Stanza 126. Our love is essentially false because of the hard decree under which we labour viz. our wretched inclination towards sin.

N. B. Here is Byron's conclusion of the whole matter. Moralising on love, he has made the following points:

(1) Love, he says, is an imaginary thing, a product of the mind. (2) It is a frenzy of youth—bitter when it lasts, bitter when it is cured. (3) It can never be satisfied; its true object can never be discovered.

And now he asks, how is it that things happen in this way? how is it that our life of love is so miserable? His answer is that

the cause lies in our nature. We have a rooted tendency to sin in our hearts and that is responsible for all.

Is a false nature—is essentially false, false by its very constitution. *This hard decree*—the severe judgment under which we live viz. our fatal inclination towards sin. *In-eradicable taint of sin*—that tendency towards sin which cannot be rooted out, which is deeply fixed in the heart. *This boundless upas*—The Upas tree, according to fable, was a poisonous plant which destroyed all other growth under its shade or in its neighbourhood. *This all blasting tree*—this tree which destroys everything within its reach. *Whose root is earth*—to be taken not with boundless upas or the 'all-blasting tree' but with the 'taint of sin' in line 128.

Whose root is earth etc.—**Expl.** the metaphor thus: Man's fatal tendency towards sin is like a tree which has its root in earth and whose leaves and branches, reaching out to the sky, rain down disease, death and bondage—in short, all the evils, which we see and even those which we see not.

Whose root is earth—viz. this tendency towards sin which is rooted in our earthly nature. *Whose leaves.....bondage*—this tendency towards sin, the results of which reach out to the skies viz. spread very far and then come down upon us in the shape of disease, death and slavery. (The poet's idea is that sin springs from the corruption of our nature and its fruits are disease, death &c.) *All the woes we see*—the evils from which we suffer and which we know to be evil. *The woes we see not*—the evils from which we suffer and yet which we do not recognise as evils. *Immedicable soul*—the soul that cannot be cured, the soul that is past all remedying. *Which throb &c.*—agreeing with woes.

Stanza 127. But though love is denied, to us, let us be bold and daring in our thought.

Let us ponder boldly—let us think with courage and audacity. Love may lead us to misery but let us find the antidote in a life of bold and audacious thought) *Abandonment of reason*—the abdication of the privilege of love. *It is a base.....thought*—To resign our right of free-thinking is a base abandonment of our privileges. *Our last and only place of refuge*—our only shelter from the miseries of the world. Connect with 'right of thought.') *Shall still be mine*—whatever others may do. *The faculty divine*—viz. the power of reason. *Chained and tortured*—crippled

and restrained; put under bondage and compulsion. *Cabined**confined*—circumscribed, limited in scope. *Bred in darkness* —trained up in ignorance.

N. B. Free and full scope is never given to our power and faculty of reason. We are brought up in ignorance; and people seem almost to think as if the light of knowledge would be unwholesome for us.

Bred in darkness.....mind—We are brought up in ignorance perchance from a fear lest the light of knowledge should prove too bright and dazzling for our vision. *The beam pours in*—yet in spite of this adverse circumstance, the light of knowledge is poured freely over our heart. *Will couch the blind*—will remove the cataract from the eye of the blind; in other words, even the blind will recover sight with patience.

(10) Stanzas 128 to 145.

The Coliseum—with a passionate interlude on Byron's own woes and sufferings.

Stanza 128. It would almost seem as if Rome had made the Coliseum so vast in order to pile up all her trophies here.

N. B. The Coliseum is a standing monument to the power of Time and Nemesis, God of Vengeance; and in the stanzas which follow, Byron invokes both Time and Nemesis in connection with his personal woes.

Arches are arches—arches piled upon arches. **N.B.** A brief but vivid touch which calls up the exterior aspect of the Coliseum before our eyes.—The Coliseum or Flavian amphitheatre was the largest circus for gladiatorial combats in ancient Rome. The place was so called perhaps with reference to a *colossal* statue of Nero, which stood near by. The exterior consisted of four tiers of columns, one upon another, the last three of which enclosed *arches* while the topmost was walled up. The axes of this vast amphitheatre were respectively 537 and 612 ft.)

As it were that Rome—it would almost appear as if Rome. *Chief trophies*—chief relics and mementos. *Of her line*—of her long course of history. *In one dome*—in one vast mansion.

Her Coliseum—The Coliseum is so vast that it almost appears as if all the trophies of Rome were intended to be gathered in

this house. *Natural torches*—means of illumination furnished by nature herself. *Divine should be the light &c*—The moon-beams serve as torches for the Coliseum, and this is in accordance with the fitness of things; for the light which illumines this vast mansion should indeed be divine.

Long explored—referring to the fact that 2/3 of the Coliseum had been removed during the middle ages to furnish building material for other mansions. *Azure gloom*—connect with 'floats' in the next stanza. *Where the deep skies.....words*—In Italy, the arched dome of heaven is overspread with colours which seem eloquent.

Stanza 129. Things, which have felt the influence of Time, speak to us as with a spirit's feeling. Things which have felt and yet defied the touch of time—they have a power which the palaces of the present day do not possess.

N. B. Byron is referring to the wonderful fascination which ancient ruins exercise over his mind.

Hues which have words—colours which seem eloquent as it were. *And speak.....heaven*—remind us of the mysteries of heaven. (In Italy, says the poet, even the colours of the sky seem to be eloquent of heaven.) *Floats.....glory*—The deep blue of the Italian sky overspreads this vast and wonderful mansion and dimly outlines its splendour. *Shadows forth*—shows us in massive outline. *Which Time hath lent*—i. e. which have felt the effect of Time; upon which Time hath left her hand. *There is given.....spirit's feeling*—Ancient ruins, houses, which have felt the influence of Time—they seem to us as if invested with human feelings. *Where he hath &c*—**N. B.** The poet develops the idea still further. Things which have been ravaged by Time speak to us with a spirit's feeling; but things which have defied power of the Time have a greater power still.

He hath lent—i. e. Time hath lent. *Where he hath.....scythe*—where Time has tried his power and yet has retired baffled. *Broke his scythe*—where the scythe of Time has been broken, i. e. where the destructive power of Time has been checked. *A power and magic*—a fascinating influence. *For which.....pomp*—a fascination which even the most pompous palaces of the present day do not possess. *And wait*—connect with 'for which.' *And wait &c*—The palaces of the present must wait for this power till they have received the dowry of ages; in other words, these modern palaces must grow ancient before they can exercise similar power over our minds.

Stanza 130. A powerful invocation to Time. You adorn and beautify all ruin ; you are the only comforter of the heart ; you are the only test of truth and love ; so I pray to you and crave from you a gift.

Beautifier of the dead—because you lend a pathetic interest to the ruins of the past. *When the heart hath bled*—i. e. when we have suffered from woes. *Comforter and only healer &c*—you are the only comforter of the suffering mind because it is only you who make us forget our woes. *Correcter.....err*—we make mistakes in our judgment, it is you who enable us to discover them. *A test of true love &c*—Time only helps us to perceive whether human love is genuine and whether what we hold as truth is true or not. *Sophists*—false reasoners. *Sole philosoher*—because you are the only true philosopher. *From thy thrift defer*—Connect the whole passage with 'crave' in the last line of the stanza.

Thy thrift.....defer—our economy is shown in this that you never fail to balance your accounts. The same fact is expressed by Longfellow in two oft-quoted lines :

> " Though the mills of God grind slowly
> yet they grind exceeding small,
> Though he stand and wait with patience
> yet with exactness grinds he all."

Unto thee.....heart—in other words, I pray to you with passionate devotion and crave of thee i. e. ask of you from your economy &c.

A gift—of course this would be the gift of vengeance upon his enemies. (It is the vengeful aspect of Time upon which the poet fastens his attention and it is from this that he desires a gift.)

Stanza 131. (Invocation to Time continued.) I lay my ruined years as offering to your shrine. If I have borne good and evil whith equanimty of spirit, let not my sufferings have been in vain.

This wreck...shrine—these massive ruins which are the very temple of time as it were. *Among.....mine*—Other and mightier offerings have been laid before this temple of yours ; let my own humble offerings also be counted among them. *Mightier offerings*—greater sacrifices ; for instance, the ruins of states and empires.

Ruins of years.....fate—**Expl.** I lay as offering before your shrine my ruined life—a life which may be few in years but which has been full of events.

More divinely desolate—There is no idea of comparison here, extremely and beautifully dosolate, is the idea. *Hear me not*—do not grant my prayer. *Too elate*—i. e. carried off by excess of joy. *If thou..... hear me not*—if you have ever seen me carried off my feet by excessive elation of spirit. *Calmly*—with equanimity; without undue elation. *Which.....whelm me*—by which I am determined not to be overwhelmed. *Whelmed*—i. e. overwhelmed. *And reserved me*—if I have been proud only against the hatred of my foes, hatred which I was determined to conquer.

Let me not.....in vain—let not my sufferings have been in vain; in other words, let my sufferings be wreaked upon those who have caused them. (The iron of bitter persecution has entered into my soul and I have borne it long with patience; but let this patience have some reward. Let not my sufferings have been entirely in vain.)

Shall they not mourn—definitely implying that the misery of his enemies is what the poet expects as his reward from Time

N. B. The idea throughout the latter part of the stanza is this. Do not grant my prayer if you have ever seen me too proud or too elate with happiness, but if my pride has been reserved only against ill-fortune, then hear my prayers with favour.

Stanza 132. (A passionate invocation to Nemesis.) You who were worshipped by the ancient Romans, you who urged the furies to pursue Orestes for his crime—you must hear the prayer of my heart.

Who never.....scale—you, who never left human wrongs unredressed. *Never left.....scale*—you who have always held the scale of human fate in equal balance; in other words, you who have never allowed one man to be too fortunate and another to be too unfortunate.

Great Nemesis—**N. B.** Nemesis was not so much the Goddess of Vengeance as the Goddess of Destiny or rather the Goddess of constant turns of fate. The ancients distrusted excess of good fortune and believed that such excess inevitably led to ruin; and accordingly, Nemesis was the Goddess reponsible for these revolutions of fate.

Here, were etc.—connect with 'I called thee' in line 1187. (In other words, here in your place of ancient worships, I call upon you to hear my prayers.) *Here where the ancients etc.*—The

Romans, like other ancient people, worshipped Nemesis; but there is nothing to show that the Coliseum was the place of this worship. 'Here,' therefore, must be taken in the sense of 'at Rome.' *Thou.....retribution*—you who persecuted Orestes for his unnatural crime of matricide. *Furies*—goddess of divine punishment, figured as horrible beings with snakes in their hair carrying torches in their hands and with eyes dripping blood. *From the abyss*—i e. from the nether world. *Orestes*—son of Agamemnon who killed his mother, Clytemnestra, in revenge for the death of his father; and it was for this that he was pursued by the Furies. *Unnatural retribution*—viz. the crime of matricide *Retribution*; because the punishment was just; *unnatural*, because it came from the hands of a son. *Just.....near*—the punishment would have been most just if it had not come from the hands of a son. *I call thee from the dust*—we may take this as simply meaning 'I call thee from amidst these ruins.' (But perhaps the idea is that Nemesis also has perished with the other features of ancient Rome, and I wish to call him back from his grave, as it were.)

Awake—come back to life.

Stanza 133. My faults may have incurred some punishment; but the punishment that has been meted out to me has been cruel and most unjust and, therefore, thou must take vengeance for it.

Ancestral faults—the faults of my family. *Wound withal*—sorrows under which I suffer. *It*—i e. the wound *Had it been weapon*—if my wound had been justly inflicted; in other words, if my punishment had been just, if it had been proportionate to my faults. *It had..... unbound*—then I would not have stanched my blood-shed; in other words I would have allowed myself to suffer without protest.

It was not.....unbound—**Expl.** I do not say that I am faultless. Perhaps my own faults and the faults of my family did deserve some punishment; but what I complain of is that the punishment has been unjust. *Shall not.....ground*—i e. shall not sink to the ground without protest. *But now*—now that I am convinced of the injustice of my foes

It is not.....unbound—**Expl.** I do not say that I am faultless. Perhaps my own faults and the faults of my family did deserve some punishment; but what I complain of: is that the punishment has been unjust i. e. disproportionately heavy.

Shall not.....ground—i.e. shall not sink to the ground without protest. *But now*—i. e. now that I am convinced of the injustice of my foes. *To the.....devote it*—I devote my blood to you ; I offer it as sacrifice before your shrine. *Thou shalt take... sake*—Another example of Byron's usual trick of leaving the sentence incomplete; but the meaning is plain. 'I omitted to take vengeance from various considerations ; but these considerations, to which I shall not allude further, do not apply to you ; you will take vengeance for me.' *For the sake*—perhaps meaning for the sake of old affection. *I sleep*—I shall omit to take vengeance personally.

N. B. The allusion thoughout is to the treatment which he received from his wife and his wife's relations. As the student will find from the Introduction, Lady Byron left her husband abruptly without assigning any cause for desertion. But this very silence gave rise to all sorts of rumours, most of them wholly unfounded and grossly unjust.

Stanza 134. If I speak now, it is not because I shrink from pain and complain of my sufferings ; rather my wish is to leave a permanent record of my wrongs so that posterity, reading my verses, may wreak vengeance upon my foes. (Byron's idea in this and the preceding stanzas may be thus indicated ; I shall not take vengeance personally, he says. But Nemesis, the great Goddess of vengence will act for me ; also posterity, who will read my verses, will wreak upon my foes the vengeance which I forbear to take.)

If my voice etc—if I allude to my sufferings now. *It is not that.....suffered*—it is not because I am unable any longer to bear the pain of my sufferings *Let him speak weak*—an example of the proud self-confidence of the poet : 'if any one has perceived the sign of failure upon my brow, if any one has seen me everwhelmed with anguish, then let him speak.', *Hath beheld decline*—hath seen signs of giving way. *Brow*—countenance. *Convulsion*—excess of grief.

But in this page etc—**N. B.** The poet's idea may be thus brought out : If I do not complain of my burden, if I do not shrink from pain, then why do I allude to my sufferings at all ? The answer is that I wish to leave a record of my wrongs in verse so that posterity may punish my foes on my behalf.

Not in the air...disperse—these words will not be forgotten. *Though.....ashes*—though I may be reduced to nothing. *A far hour*—a distant time i. e. the people of a distant age. *Shall wreak.....verse*—will fulfil the prophecy of these verses; will

wreak upon my foes the curse which breathes through these verses *On human heads*—i e on the heads of my foes. *And pile..... curse*—I may forbear to punish my foes: but posterity will not have the same reason for forbearance and they will wreak upon my enemies the curse which I decline to pronounce.

Stanza 135. My brain has been burnt, my heart has bee rent asunder, my hopes blighted by my injuries; yet my only curse to my enemies will be forgiveness.

That curse.....forgiveness—If I forgive my enemies that will be sufficient curse for them; if they are men, they will sink under the shame of this curse *Have I.....lot*—Have I not had to struggle against evil fortunes all my life? *Seared*—i. e. burnt, ravaged with grief. *Riven*—i. e. torn in two by anguish. *Sapped*—undermined; destroyed. *Blighted*—disgraced; covered with infamy. *Life's life lied away*—In other wards, have not people slandered me falsely and taken away my honour? Have they not lied against my honour and deprived me of that which is more priceless than life? *And only.....survey*—If I have not been driven to desperation, it is not from any choice of my enemies; rather, it is because I am not as mean of soul as they are. *Because not altogether etc*—because I am not made altogether etc. *Such clay*—i. e. such mean and base elements. *Rots*—corrupts. *Those whom I survey*—viz. my enemies.

Stanza. 136. From treachery to downright violence, I have experienced every variety of human wrong.

N. B. The idea is that every species of crime, petty as well as great, has been perpetrated against him.

Mighty wrong—injuries of great magnitude *Petty perfidy*—little, mean acts of treachery and disloyalty. *Human things*—mark the accent of contempt in the expression. His enemies are *things*, hardly human beings. *Have I not.....do*—Have I not known how far human treachery can go?

Foaming calumny—unchecked and unrestrained slander. *The loud roar of calumny*—the full-tongued obloquy of the multitude. *Small whisper*—contrasted with 'loud roar' above. *From the loud roar.....few*—I have experienced the loud roar of the multitude,; I have suffered also from the whispered slanders of the few. *Subtler venom*—more insidious treachery. *Reptile crew*—treacherous band.

Subtler venom speechless obloquy—The whole passage is to be taken together and its substance may be thus given ; 'Just as I have experienced the loud roar of the many and the small whisper of the few, so I have experienced also the subtle enmity of that treacherous band, who look both ways at once, who never utter any word of enmity against me and yet who can slander away reputation by a shrug or a sigh'

The Janus glance.....true—people who are double-faced like the God Janus, who look sincere and yet whose every look is a lie. (Janus, among the ancient Romans, was god of the year, usually represented as having two faces, one looking back to the past, one forward to the future.)

Learning. silence—these people—the reptile crew, as Byron calls them—have learnt to lie with looks alone. *Some shrug or sigh*—they are never caught because they never utter any word ; but they just shrug their shoulders or heave a sigh and in this way manage to convey a world of meaning.

Deal round.....obloquy—They never utter any word of obloquy and hence, happy fools, are deceived by them ; but with their shrugs and sighs they do their work of slander just as effectively as others *Happy fools*—referring to those credulous people who believe in this reptile crew and so are happy in their ignorance.

Stanza 137. My body may perish and my mind lose its force ; but there is something in me which will continue to live.

Have not vain—my life has not altogether been useless. *Its force*—i.e its intellectual vigour. *Its fire*—i.e. its enthusiasm ; the fire of its imagination. *Even.....pain*—even in the attempt to battle with sufferings. *That within me*—referring to the poetic inspiration within him. *Which shall tire...time*—which will conquer both time and sufferings.

Shall tire—i.e. shall tire out, shall exhaust. (The idea is as if the poet's imaginative fire would be battling with torture and time.)

Breathe—i e. continue to live. *Unearthly*—divine, immortal ; referring to his poetic fire.

The remembered tone.....lyre—**Expl.** Just as the music of the lyre, once heard, continues to live in the memory, so there is

something in my writings which will continue to live in the memory of the people even when I perish.

Shall.....sink—will produce a deep impression upon tender hearts. *And more.....love*—hearts that are rocky now, i.e. cruel, obdurate will be moved by this poetry of mine and melt into a stream of remorse and pity.

Stanza 138. But I shall speak no more of myself. Welcome to Namesis whose favourite haunt is amongst the ruins.

The seal is set—i e the seal of silence is set upon this strain of mine ; in other words, I shall speak no more of myself, *Thou dread power*—referring to Nemesis or perhaps referring to the God (if any such there was) who presided over ruins.

With a deep awe—striking a deep awe into the hearts of those who visit these ruins. *All distinct from fear*—a feeling of awe which, however, is very different from fear. *Haunt* - favourite dwelling place. *Where the dead.....mantles* - where ruined walls are covered with a growth of ivy.

And the solemn scene.....unseen—**Expl.** This scene is solemn in itself ; but from thy presence it derives a deeper and clearer meaning still, so that we seem to grow into and become a part of the very spirit of the place.

A sense so deep and clear—such a deep and profound meaning. *What has been*—viz. the past. *Grow unto the spot*—We seem to become native unto the spot : our existence seems to be identified with the genius of the place.

All seeing but unseen—Connect with 'thee' in l. 1250 **Expl.** Your all-pervasive presence lends an additional reverence to the scene so that, under its influence, we seem to identify ourselves completely with the genius of the place.

Stanza 139. And this place, now so empty and desolate, did it once throb with the applause of assembled thousands ? did people meet here to be slaughtered by their fellow men ?

Eager nations—assembled multitudes. Of course there is a reference to the fact that in Rome's days of power, people from all nations and climates thronged to the Eternal City. *As man... ...fellowman*—referring to the gladiatorial combats of which the Coliseum was the principal scene.

And here.....fellowman—The assembled crowds of many nations either murmured with pity and sympathy or broke into loud applause as one gladiator was slaughtered by another in this arena. *Wherefore slaughtered*—What was the cause of this senseless slaughter ?

Such were.....pleasure—There was no cause excepting that such was the general rule of the circus **N. B.** In these gladitorial combats, the rule was that if one party was wounded the other cried out 'Hoc Habet' and then the wounded man appealed to the protection of Cæsar or the multitude. If he had fought well, the multitude might wish that he should be spared ; but if otherwise, then the audience turned down their thumbs and this was a signal that the man was to be slain.

Such were laws—this, viz. the murder of the wounded gladiator was in accordance with the gentle rules of the circus-(Of course . 'genial' is sarcastic.) *Imperial pleasure*—Very frequently, the Emperor presided over these combats and it was his function and privilege to save the wounded gladiator from death.

Wherefore not—another outburst of Byron's cynicism. After all why should we wonder that one man should be slain by another in these gladiatorial combats ? Since man must die, what does it matter where he dies, whether it is in the battle-field or in the circus ?

Maw—stomach. *To fill worms*—to become food for worms, i.e. to die. Since we must all die and thus fill the stomach of worms, does it matter where we die ? *Listed spot*—a ground enlistsd or enclosed by barriers to serve for the purpose of combats. *Rot*—i.e. corrupt and decay ; fester.

Stanza 140. A wonderful picture of the gladiator vanquished in the arena and nearing death.—Byron gives the picture as typical of the incidents which must have taken place in these theatres.

N. B. Byron's verses are inspired by a famous statue, now in the Capitoline musuem and which represents a man in the last agonies of death. At the present day it is generally supposed that the statue represents, not a dying gladiator, but a dying Gaul. But the matter is not quite free from controversy ; and whether it was the dying Gaul or the dying Gladiator, nothing would affect the matchless eloquence of Byron's verse.

The Gladiator—As Byron says in his note there were two

classes of gladiators in Rome—compulsory and voluntary. *Voluntary gladiators* were those Roman citizens who took to the work as a sort of profession while among *compulsory gladiators* were slaves, malefactors and prisoners of war; and evidently Byron supposes his gladiator to have been a barbarian captive, a man who had his home on the banks of the far Danube and whose thoughts, in the last moments of his life, returned to his home and to his family and children.

Consents to death—yields to the power of death. *But conquers agony*—suppresses all expression of anguish. *His manly brow.... agony*—**Expl.** The hue of death is upon his face but there is no trace of anguish there. *Sinks gradually low*—as life ebbs away from him. *Red gash*—fearful wound. *Fall heavy*—i. e. fall in thick drops. *Like the first etc*—The drops of blood issuing from his wound are thick and heavy like the first drops of a thunder storm. *The arena swims around him*—His head becomes dizzy and confused so that the theatre seems to swim before his eyes. *Inhuman shout*—the cruel applause of the brutal multitude. *Hailed*—greeted. (The man dies even before the applause which greeted his murderer has died away.)

Stanza 141. What is it that the gladiator thinks in the last agonising moments of his life? He thinks of his rude hut on the Danube, of his Dacian mother and of his young barbarians, all at play.

Heard it—it viz. the cruel shouts of the multitude. *Heeded not*—did not care for and did not understand its significance. *His eyes.....away*—His heart was not in this place; it had travelled far and his eyes also obeyed his heart. In other words, his heart was thinking of his home and of his family and his eyes also seemed to be picturing their images.

His eyes.....heart—His eyes saw not the things presented before it but the things which he was picturing in his mind *That was far away*—and his heart was fixed, not upon the theatre before him but upon his home by the distant Danube. *Nor prize*—i. e. he recked not of the prize he lost by losing the game. *His young barbarians*—his young children—barbarians because he also was a barbarian. *Dacian mother*—his wife, a Dacian woman. The Roman province of Dacia would correspond to a portion of modern Roumania and was one of the two provinces conquered by Trajan. *Butchered.....holiday*—cut to pieces in order to provide the Romans with mirth. *All this.....blood*—All these thoughts of home and family rushed upon his mind just as the blood

gushed out of his body. *Shall he expire etc.*—The poet breaks off in the midst of his description in order to call down vengeance upon the Romans for their cruel deed. *Shall.....unavenged*—Do you think that such crimes will go on and yet there will be no punishment for them ?

Arise ye Goths—referring to the later barbarian invasion of Rome.—The poet fancifully speaks as if these barbarian invasions were Rome's penalty for her cruelty to her barbarian captives. Captive Goths, captive barbarians, had been butchered to make a Roman holiday. And what is the result ? Rome was sacked and ravaged by the Goths in return.—Of course, as a matter of history there was no causal connection between the two ; but the poet supposes the latter to have been just retribution for the former.

Stanza 142. But mark the just revenge of Time ; a vast desolation reigns over the huge circus ; and my solitary footfall seems strangely loud in a place where enormous crowds buzzed and murmured in ancient days.

Where murder... ..steam—where murder rioted and revelled, where the very spirit of murder seemed to breathe and reign.

Buzzing nations—see 'eager nations' in St. 139. *Choked the ways*—blocked all the passages. *Like a mountain stream etc.*—These people roared and murmured just as a mountain-brook roars and babbles as it flows along its bed. *Strays* - follows its winding course.

Where the Roman.....crowd—where the blame of the Roman audience meant death and their applause meant life ; where people sported with life and death like play things ; in other words, where life was held in such cheap account.

My voice—i. e. my feeble and solitary voice. *Sounds much*—i. e. sounds strangely loud. **N. B** What the poet emphasises is the contrast between the desolation of the present and the crowded multitude of the past.—Where once millions of people played with life and death, my solitary voice there seems to be strangely loud.

Fall the stars etc.—The dim light of the stars streams down upon an empty theatre, upon ruined walls and statues. *Arena void*—theatre, empty of people. *Seem...loud*—because they are so unusual ; because they contrast with the vast and fearful silence of the place.

Stanza 143. Inspite of the ravages of Time and spoliation, the Coliseum is still an enormous ruin.

What ruin—what a massive and gigantic ruin! *Reared*—erected, built. *From its mass.....reared*—referring to the fact that during the middle ages, the Coliseum was freely and indiscriminately spoiled in order to furnish building-material for palaces and mansions. *The enormous skeleton*—this gigantic ruin.

And marvel.... .appeared—You hear that much material has been taken away from the Coliseum and you wonder where this material could have found a place. (In other words, the place is so gigantic that you can hardly conceive that it possessed further and additional material still.)

Could have appeared—could have found place. *Hath it.. plundered*—Looking upon the massive character of the ruins you wonder if the place has been spoiled at all. *Or but cleared*—or, if only the debris has been cleared away. *Alas neared*—but when you approach nearer to the place, the ruins become painfully apparent.

Developed—brought into clearer view by nearness. *Opens the decay*—the decay unfolds itself before our eyes. *Colossal fabric*—this enormous structure. *It will not... .day*—The glaring light of day makes its deformities painfully apparent. (The brightness of daylight brings into clear and ghastly relief the ruin that has overtaken the place.) *Which streams reft away*—that daylight which unclothes the nakedness of the place, which pours in a flood over the place, and discloses all the ravages that have been inflicted upon it by Time and by man. *Streams too much*—pours in a flood and thus brings out. *All*—i. e. all the ravages *All years, etc.*—i. e. all the ravages which years and man have inflicted upon the place.

Stanza 144. Approach it, therefore, by moonlight and then call back the spirits of the dead,

Its topmost arch—not the topmost arch of heaven as one commentator seems to suppose but the topmost arch of the Coliseum. (Of course the moon does not actually climb the arch; it climbs the sky so as to be in a position over the arch.)

To climb.....arch—i.e. to climb the sky so as to reach a position just over the topmost arch. *Its*—viz. of the Coliseum. *Pauses there*—i.e. seems to pause there. *Twinkle*—i.e. peep. *Loops of time*—i.e. loopholes made by Time; gaps and breaches in the wall caused by the revages of Time. *Low*—soft, and gentle.

The garland forest—i.e. the wreath of Ivy and other plants with which the ruins are clothed. *Waves.....forest etc*—The ruined walls of the Coliseum are so thickly overgrown with ivy and other plants that they resemble a forest ; and the night-breeze, blowing softly, makes this forest wave in the air.

The garland wear—the thick growth of plants and weeds which the ruined walls wear like a garland. *Like laurels.....head*—Suetonius tells us that Caesar was extremely pleased with the decree which permitted him to wear a perpetual crown of laurels inasmuchas the crown would cover his baldness.

Like laurels. head.—**Expl.** Just as the wreath of laurels covered the baldness of Caesar's head so the wreath of forest growth waving on the ruined walls of the Coliseum hides the nakedness and desolation of the place.

When the light.... glare—i.e. a calm moonlight *Doth not glare*—does not shine too brightly. *In this majestic circle*—out of the ring of this massive ruin. *Raise the dead*—i.e. call back the memories of the great departed. *Heroes have trod etc*—Remember that this place was once visited by heroes and that you are treading upon their dust and let that thought fill your mind with solemn awe and reverence.

Stanza 145. When the Coliseum falls, Rome will fall ; and when Rome falls, the world itself will fall : so once was said by Anglo-Saxon pilgrims from the shores of our country. But Rome and the Coliseum have both fallen : and yet the world continues.

While stands the Coliseum etc—The passage occurs in the Anglo-Saxon dramas attributed to Bede and has been quoted by Gibbon in his 'Decline and Fall.'—Of course this was an expression of tribute to the vastness and grandeur of the Coliseum.

While stands the Coliseum etc—**N. B.** The Coliseum to these primitive people was a symbol and true expression of the vastness and grandeur of Rome itself and Rome was a sign or symbol of the sovereignty of the whole world.—If the Coliseum falls, that will be a warning that Rome itself will fall and, if Rome falls, that will be a warning that the world itself will perish. In other words, the fortunes of Rome are bound up with the Coliseum just as the fortunes of the world are bound up with Rome. *Which we.....ancient*—which are so recent when compared with the Coliseum for instance. The Anglo-Saxon invasion of England

took place sometime in the 5th century A. D. while the Coliseum dates back to the 1st century B. C.; and so it is at least 500 years older than the earliest Anglo-Saxon times.

Are still.....foundation—are still physically existing. *Mortal things*—mortal and therefore perishable.

These three.....things—i.e. the Coliseum, Rome and the world. *Unaltered all*—i.e. unaltered in their physical aspects.

N. B. The underlying implication of the poet may be thus expressed: The pilgrims from Saxon lands used to think that Rome, the Coliseum and the world—these three would not be changed. In one sense they are unaltered: they physically continue to exist. But in another sense, how fearfully altered at least two of them have been!

Past... ..skill—beyond chance of recovery. *Rome and her ruin.....den*—The world still continues unchanged both physically and morally and yet the ruin of Rome is complete.

Rome... ..what ye will—Here, says the poet, is a ghastly commentary upon the prophecy of the Anglo-Saxon pilgrims. They had thought that when Rome fell, the world itself would fall. Now Rome has fallen utterly and irretrievably; and yet the world continues to flourish as vigorously as ever. *The same wide den etc*—the world still continues to be the home of all that is wicked and evil.

(11). Stanza 146 to 147.

From the Coliseum the poet passes on to notice the Pantheon.

Stanza 146. Addressing the Pantheon, Byron says: Time and Tyrants both have been baffled by you, you are the home of art and religion, you are the pride of Rome.

N. B. The Pantheon is the most perfectly preserved among all the buildings of ancient Rome It was completed in 27 B. C. by Agrippa, friend and general of Augustus, and dedicated to the ancestors of the Julian family, Byron calls it 'the shrine of all gods'; but this is simply a pun upon the name, for in its original character the place was not a temple at all.. The building is circular in shape—a rotunda—and receives its light from a great opening in the dome of the hall, 28ft in diameter. The diameter of the hall itself is 142½ft and the height from the floor to the apex of the dome is the same.

Simple—i. e. classically simple in its outline. *Austere*—devoid of superfluous ornaments.

Shrine of all saints—This is a reference to the modern name of the place. It is now called the 'Church of Mary and the saints.' *Temple of all gods*—punning upon the name 'Pantheon' and also referring to the fact that the place was formerly used as a Pagan temple while it is now used as a Christian church.

Blest by time—referring to the beautifying effect of time upon the place. *Spared time*—Time has not simply spared the place but adorned it too. *Looking tranquillity*—looking an image of perfect peace and serenity. *Nods*—threatens to fall. *And man.....ashes*—and man pursues the weary course of his life from birth to death. *Through thorns*—through difficulties and dangers.

Looking tranquillity.....ashes—**Expl.** While every human thing around you falls or threatens to fall, while man pursues his usual brief and futile course of life and is overcome by danger and death you alone preserve a look of perfect serenity and calm.

Shall thou not last—Great and tranquil as you are, will you not endure for ever? *Shiver upon thee*—are powerless against you. *Time's scythe.....thee*—Time and tyrants—both are powerless against you. (The reference is to two of the chief agents of devastation in the world, years and tyrants,)

Stanza 147. To artists, you are a model; to antiquarians, a place replete with glory; to worshippers, a place of devotion; while pilgrims of genius may gaze upon honoured forms here.

Despoiled—referring to the fact that some of the ornaments of the place, notably all the metal work, had been removed. *Yet perfect*—referring to the complete state of preservation in which the place still stands. *With thy circle.....hearts*—There is a feeling of holiness associated with your walls which appeals to every variety of mind and intellect. *A model*—i. e. a perfect type of architectural beauty. *For the sake of ages*—i. e. for the sake of Rome's historical associations. *To him.....ages*—i. e. to the antiquarian who chiefly cares for the relics of Rome's ancient greatness.

Glory.....aperture—To the antiquarian a stream of glory—glory derived from Rome's ancient past—seems to pour down through the aperture in the dome of the Pantheon. In other words all the glory and greatness of Rome's ancient days seems

to pervade the Pantheon's look and atmosphere. *Thy sole aperture*—referring to the fact that the Pantheon receives all its light from one circular opening in the dome. *For their beads*—i. e. where they can recount their prayers. *Who feel for genius*—who may not care for the historical associations of the place and may not care for religion but have reverence for genius. *May repose &c*—i. e. their eyes may rest with a feeling of deep admiration. *Honoured forms*—referring to the fact that many of the greatest artists of Rome were buried within the Pantheon. *Whose busts... ...close*—whose busts can be seen all around the place

(12) Stanzas 148 to 151.

A pathetic story of a daughter giving suck to her father and thus keeping him alive. As Byron sketches the story, we are to suppose that the father and daughter were cast into a dungeon and left there to die of starvation.

Stanza 148. Peering into the darkness of the dungeon, two forms—one of an old man and the other of a woman—shadow themselves forth on the sight.

N. B. As Mr. Tozer remarks, this story is not exactly new and it is to be found repeated in various forms in different countries. In Rome, the legend is associated with the Church of St. Nicolo, called the *Caritas Romana*.

A dungeon—an underground chamber conected with the Church mentioned above. *In whose gaze on*—What is it that I see in the dimly lighted vaults of this room? *Nothing &c*—Mark the vividness of the description with which the poet narrates the whole thing as from the point of view of an actual spectator. Gazing down into the room, at first he beholds before him only darkness: and then, out of the darkness, two forms seem to take shape and life.

Are slowly shadowed—dimly appear before the view. *Insulated phantoms &c*—clear and distinct shapes. *Phantoms of the brain*—imaginary visions. (At least such they appeared at first sight; but then the poet corrects himself and says that it is not so.) *I see them.... ...plain*—and therefore they cannot be phantoms of the brain. *In whose vein...nectar*—The blood which flows through her veins and feeds her breast is pure like nectar. *Her unmantled neck &c*—i. e. with the covering taken off from her neck and breast. (The idea is that she had taken off this

cover in order to suckle her father just as a mother may give her breast to an infant.)

Stanza 149. The mother perceives joy even in the piping cry of the child when it is impatient for its mother's milk.

N. B. The student will notice that the first line of this description refers to the young woman of Byron's story, while the rest is a general description and applies to mothers generally.

The deep pure fountain &c.—i. e. the breast of the mother. *Full swells &c*—referring to the particular case before him. *Where on the heart &c*—and then from a description of one particular mother, Byron passes on to speak of mothers generally. *Our first &c*—i. e. mother's milk. *Blest into mother*—developing into a mother and finding inexpressible happiness in the new character; now grown into a mother and finding happiness therein. *Piping cry*—the thin, treblevoice of a child. *Lips*—here standing for infants. *That brook...suspense*—children who can endure no pain and are impatient even of a little delay. *A joy... ...knows not*—perceives a joy which the mere man can not conceive. *Its cradled nook*—i. e. the cradle which serves as a sheltering nook for its body. *When the wife.. ...man knows not*—**Construe** the whole passage thus:—The wife, now developed into a mother, perceives in her child's looks and even in its impatient cry a joy which no mere man can conceive,

Put forth its leave—gradually develop. *What may yet*—The mother rejoices to watch the gradual development of the child; but then, what will the child be in after life?

Cain was Eve's—Cain and Abel were the first children of Adam and Eve and Cain murdered his brother.—The implication of the passage is this: Eve was innocent and pure and yet her first child was a murderer. How can one prophesy then, as to what a new born child may devolop into afterwards?

Stanza 150. But here it is not a child whom the young woman in the dungeon is nursing. Behold, she is giving suck to her own father.

The milk.....gift—The mother's milk is derived ultimately from the father because she derived her birth from him; and now she is returning to her father that very gift. *The debt..... birth*—the debt which she inherited at the very moment of her birth.

Born with her birth—**Expl.** thus:—The daughter, in suckling her father, is but returning his own gift ro her. How is that

so? Because it is the daughter's blood that feeds her milk and she inherited that blood from her father.

He shall not.....Nile—**Expl.** She will not permit her father to die so long as health and filial affection keep up the milk in her breast, that milk which is holier and more beneficent even than the water of the Nile.

Holy feeling—pious feeling of affection for the father. *Great nature's Nile*—i. e. mother's milk ; so called with reference to the fact that the Nile fertilises Egypt with its periodic innundations and thus keeps the life of the Egyptians. (Just as the Nile keeps up the lives of the Egyptians so it is the mother's milk which keeps up the lives of all human beings.) *Rises etc*—The mother's milk is purer and more beneficent than the Nile. *Heaven's..... tide*—even in heaven itself there is no stream so purer and holy as the stream of mother's milk.

Stanza 151. The milky way was fabled to have risen from the milk of Hera ; but beautiful as that story is, its purity is nothing compared with the purity of this.

Starry fable—fable relating to stars.

The starry.....way—a Greek legend concerning the origin of the milky way. (According to this legend, Heracles, who was son of Jove and Alcemma, was carried off to heaven after his birth and put to the breast of Hera who was then asleep. But the Queen of heaven put away the boy from her when she awoke ; and the milk spilt from her breast gave rise to the milky way.)

The starry fable.....purity—The Greek legend concerning the origin of the milky way is beautiful ; but it has nothing of the purity and holiness of his Roman legend of father and daughter.

It is.....way—it is a story of a far purer and holier character. ('Constellation' is of course suggested by the mention of 'milky way' above.)

And sacred.....worlds—**Expl.** The milky way shining broad and bright across the sky and from which new worlds and stars are said to take their origin, is one of the triumphs of nature ; but this story of the daughter nursing her own father, this apparent reversal of the ordinary process of things is a greater triumph still.

In this reverse of her decree—in this apparent violation of her law. (Of course, according to the usual law of nature, it is the father who feeds the daughter ; but here it is the daughter feeding

her father and thus there is an apparent reversal of the order of nature.)

In the abyss.....world—a poetic description of the milky way. The milky way or the Nebula is supposed to be a vast mass of starry matter, as we may calll it, where new worlds and stars are ever in the making. *Where. . ..worlds*—where new worlds are still in the making. *No drop... ..heart*—Every drop of your holy milk will do its work and will find its way to her father's life.

Replenishing. life—again referring to the fact that the daughter nursing her father is an apparent reversal of nature's decree. (Your life i. e. milk, will replenish its source, in other words, your father's life, which is its source. Your father's life is the source of your milk and now your milk will go to keep that source alive.)

As our freed souls etc—a Pantheistic simile. Our souls, says the poet, take their rise from the universe and then again return to the universe, thus adding to the sum total of the life of the universe. Similarly, the mother's milk has its source in the father and yet now it returns to the father, adding to his life.

Stanza 152. Hadrian was a colossal copyist of deformities. Philosophers smile on the vanity which prompts man to raise a huge structure to preserve his own scanty remains

N. B. The point of Byron's criticism is this : The pyramids are ugly but they are grand because of the vastness of the desert where they stand. Hadrian, in seeking to copy the pyramids, could only copy their deformity but could not copy their grandeur, for that grandeur could not be transplanted from Egypt to Rome. He was thus a copyist of deformity though on a colossal scale — Hadrian, who succeeded Trajan, was one of the greatest of the Roman Emperors.

Mole—mausoleum, huge building. *Which Hadrian etc*—the mausoleum which Hadrian raised as a sort of pyramid over his tomb is now called the Castle of St. Angelo. *Imperial mimic*—agreeing with Hadrian in the preceding line. *Mimic..... piles*—Hadrian who wanted to imitate the pyramids of Egypt. *Colossal.....deformity*—and in seeking to imitate the pyramids he proved only to be a copyist of ugliness on an enormous scale. *Travelled phantasy*—imagination affected by the cities which he had seen in his travels.

Whose travelled phantasy.....dome—The imagination of Hadrian, affected by the cities which he had seen in foreign countries, forced the Roman artists to build as for giants, i. e. to build on a colossal scale and to raise this vast dome in order that his ashes might remain buried under its shed.—**N. B.** The student will place a comma after a 'phantasy.'

To build for giants—i. e. to build on a colossal scale. *From the far Niles . . .model*—forced his artisans to build on the model of the pyramids. *His shrunken ashes*—the relics of his Imperial body which in any case must have been scanty. *Huge design*—enormous building. *Which spring birth*—which was erected for such a purpose viz. to give shelter to the poor remnants of his body. *How smiles birth*—**Expl.** The philosophic spectator smiles on the contrast between the hugeness of the building and the scanty remains which it was intended to cover.

Stanzas 153 to 159.

St. Peter's church with its vast size and magnificent proportions.

Stanzas 153, 154. I have seen the marvellous temple of Diana at Ephesus ; I have seen the golden roofs of the church of St. Sophia at Constantinople ; but since the desecration of Zion, thou art unique amongst temples.

The dome—here standing for the whole church of St. Peter and not simply the dome.

N. B. The church of St. Peter is the metropolitan church of the see of Rome. The present building was commenced perhaps in the year 1506 ; but the dome was not completed till the year 1590 and the consecration of the whole building took place only in 1625 so that altogether the construction extended over a period of more than a century.—Some details of its proportions would be interesting and would also help us to understand what follows :—

The church is of the shape of a Latin cross measuring 613½ft. × 446½ft. The diameter of the dome is 139¼ft. while the height of the dome to the top of the guilt cross above is 448ft

To which—compared to which. *Diana's marvel*—the marvellous temple of Diana at Ephesus. (Ephesus was one of the principal cities of Lydia in Asia Minor and in ancient times was

chiefly remarkable on account of its great temple dedicated to Artemis or Diana. The measurements of this temple were 164ft. × 342½ ft. i. e. less than ⅓ of the temple of St. Peter.)

To which... ...cell—Compared with its magnificent church, even the marvellous temple of Diana at Ephesus would sink into the proportions of an insignificant room. *Cell*—a room, mere chamber. *Christ's.....tomb*—the great Christian temple raised over the tomb of St. Peter. St. Peter, chief of the apostles of Christ, was said to have suffered martyrdom at Rome ; and the tradition is that the original Church of St. Peter—the Basilika built by Constantine—was erected over the scene of his matyrdom.

Ephesian's miracle—the great temple of Diana at Ephesus. *I have beheld etc*—The statement is to be taken with a grain of caution. Byron no doubt visited Asia Minor but he tells us that he did not care to visit the temple. *Its column.....shade*—the place is now in ruins and is infested by wild beasts.

Sophia's bright roof—Just as St. Peter's was the metropolition Church of the Roman see, so the Church of St. Sophia, built by Justinian, was the metropolition Church of the Christians at Constantinople. Since 1453, it has been used as a mosque. The dome is 105 ft. as compared with 139¾ ft. of St. Peter's and its interior height is only 184 ft.

Bright roofs—gilded roofs. *Swell... ...sun*—rise in the air and glitter with the reflection of sunlight upon them. *Usurping Moslem*—so called because the Church is rightfully the property of the Christians and the Moslems are intruders there.

Stanza 154. *Standest alone*—i. e. art unique.

But thou.....alone—**Expl.** Whether we compare you with ancient temples or modern churches, you are unique ; there is nothing else with which to compare you. *Worthiest.....true*—you are a worthy temple of God, that God who is holy and true. *Zion*—i. e. the famous temple of the Jews at Jerusalem, said to have been erected by Solomon.

When that.....city—when God abandoned the Jews and gave up their cause. *In his honour piled*—erected in honour of God. *Since Zion.....aspects*—Since the desecration of Zion what other temple has a nobility of aspect comparable to yourself

Are aisled—i. e. are embodied in its aisles, i. e. arches

passages. *Ark*—properly a vessel or receptacle for holy relics; here simply in the sense of a sanctuary or place of worship.

Stanza 155. And in spite of its vastness, you are so uplifted in spirit by the grandeur of the building that you are not overpowered by its vastness

Overwhelms thee not—does not overpower thy spirit, because the very grandeur of the building increases the capacity of thy soul.) *It is not lessoned*—**N. B.** Here the poet answers his own question. 'When you enter the building you are not overwhelmed by its grandeur, not because the grandeur has become less but because you have grown greater; and you have grown greater because the grandeur of the place has communicated something of its vastness to you.' *It is not lessened*—*it* viz. the Church. *Expanded*—its capacity heightened by the genius of the spot, i. e. by the prevailing grandeur of the place.

And can...immortality—The poet continues his former idea. 'Your soul is expanded when you enter this Church; and now you can only take that to be the fit abode of your soul which seems to enshrine your hopes of immortality. *Can... ...abode*—can only consider that abode to be fit.

Wherein appear.....immortality—**Expl.** Your soul having so expanded, this building will not fail to appeal to you. You will find satisfaction only in that sort of building in which man's infinite hopes of immortality are bodied forth, as it were; and in this building they are so embodied. *And thou...brow*—The poet expresses a beautiful idea: 'You have seen the Church of St Peter and yet have not been overwhelmed by it. So one day, if considered fortunate enough, you will be permitted to see the vision of the godhead and will not be overwhelmed by its grandeur.' (Just as you have not been overpowered by God's temple so you will not be overpowered by God himself when you see him face to face.) *So defined*—i. e. limited and confined as you are. *His Holy of Holies*—i. e. his inner sanctuary and temple. *Blasted*—withered, scorched; burnt up as it were. *By his brow*—by the appalling grandeur of his countenance.

Stanza 156. (The same idea continued). Your mind expands as you move up this stately Church. Besides, you are deceived by its gigantic elegance so that you are never overpowered by its grandeur.

Thou movest.....elegance—**N. B.** The idea is simple but the construction is involved and the sentence is incomplete: hence some difficulty may arise. **Explain** the substance thus: One

who is actually climbing up a mountain can never grasp its entire vastness, partly because his own comparative elevation has got higher and partly because he is deceived by the gigantic symmetry of the mountain. So, one who moves up this Church, his mind increasing in capacity with every step that he advances, is deceived by the harmonious vastness of this structure and is not overwhelmed by the same.

Thou movest.....elegance—**Explain** the construction thus: you move; but as your mind also increases with the advance, you are deceived by its gigantic elegance. (For *construction* and *explanation*, the student will first omit the second line which simply gives a simile.) *Like climbing.....rise*—You are deceived by the gigantic elegance of the Church just as a man who is climbing up the steep side of some great mountain - a mountain which rises ever higher as he himself rises—is deceived by the vast harmony of its proportions.

Some great Alps—here standing for any great mountain. *Which.. .rise*—New heights constantly begin to appear as the man himself climbs up higher and higher. *Gigantic elegance*—the massive beauty of its proportions. (The details are massive and enormous, yet they are so beautiful and harmonious that the effect of the whole is one of surpassing elegance.) *Vastness. grows etc*—Take it in apposition with elegance. *Vastness..... harmonise*—**Expl.** Every moment the vastness of the whole building unfolds itself more and more clearly before you and yet all this vastness is harmonised and exquisitely proportionate.

All musical... immensities—exquisitely and gracefully proportioned inspite of the hugeness of its dimensions. *Rich marbles, richer painting*—These are the details which go to make up the vastness of the whole. *Rich marbles*—beautifully carved statues. *Shrines*—here referring to the altars of the Church.

Haughty dome. . .structures—the gigantic dome which itself is comparable in its proportions to the vast mansions of the earth. (The dome is only a detail of the Church of St. Peter: yet this portion or fragment is equal in vastness to one of the ordinary mansions of the earth.)

Though their frame . claim—Those other buildings, of which the dome is the equal, are firmly planted upon, the earth while this dome rises in the air: yet in spite of this difference, the dome is as magnificent in size as one of those buildings. (Of

course the poet is referring to the marvellous engineering skill which was required to uplift this vast dome to the air.)

Stanza 157. We can never grasp a thing all at once; we can only take it in piece by piece: and so we must do with this church.

Thou.. . .all—you cannot see the whole church all at once because your senses and intellect are limited. *But piecemeal. whole*—you must break up the whole into parts and thus understand it. (In other words, your senses being limited, you can only perceive the details each at a time, and then combine these details so as to form a mighty whole.) *Piecemeal...break*—you must analyse the whole thing, break it up into pieces, as it were, and then subject them to separate contemplation.

As the ocean etc—The poet illustrates the idea by a simile. You cannot see the vast ocean all at once; but the ocean breaks itself up among innumerable gulfs and bays and these gulfs and bays you can contemplate separately. So also you have to analyse this vast building into its component parts and then contemplate each of such parts separately. *That ask the eye*—The ocean breaks itself up among many bays and each of these bays demands the whole attention of the eye. *Condense thy soul*—concentrate the whole force of your mind. *To more immediate objects*—i. e. upon objects which you can see and feel about.

Control thy thoughts until thy mind etc. etc.—**Expl.** You cannot grasp the whole vastness of the place all at once but you must not get impatient at this. Rather, you must go bit by bit, learn first the eloquent proportions of the whole and then allow the rest to unfold itself gradually before the mind and so you will be able to comprehend that grandeur which at first you did not perceive.

Control thy thoughts—i.e. you must not get impatient at being unable to grasp the whole grandeur of the place at once. *Hath got by heart*—hath learnt thoroughly. *Its eloquent proportions*—i.e. the impressive details about the measurements of the building. *Unroll*—and thus unfold bit by bit. *In mighty graduations*—i. e. vast and large stretches as it were. *Which at once.....dart*—the whole of which did not and could not flash all at once upon your mind. (You must grasp the thing bit by bit and grade by grade, though each of these grades may be fairly large and vast.)

Stanza 158. The same idea continued. This piecemeal understanding of a great thing is due to the inevitable limitations of our intellect.

Not by his fault but thine—If you cannot grasp the whole glory of the place at once, the fault is not with the building but with your own limited intellect. *Is.....grasp*—can grasp things only bit by bit, little by little. *As it is that*—**N. B.** Mr. Tozer takes it to mean 'as it is the case that.'—But in that case there would not have been any semi-colon after 'expression.'

Taking the passage as it is, we can explain it thus: Our senses are of gradual grasp and, as things stand, our powers of speech fail to express our most intense emotions. (This interpretation makes it necessary that we should substitute 'which' for 'what' in line 1416; but considering Byron's usual looseness of expression, that perhaps is not a large demand to make. In any case, the meaning of the whole passage is plain.)

As it is.....gaze—**Expl.** As our feelings outstrip our powers of expression, so this stately and magnificent building outstrip our powers of comprehension.—We cannot express the full intensity of our thoughts, and so we cannot comprehend this building in its entirety. *Outstrips.....expression*—our power of speech is too feeble to express our feeling adequately.

This outshining.....edifice—this structure with its surpassing glory and vastness. *Fools.....gaze*—baffles our powers of understanding. *Fond gaze*—gaze here meaning the senses and understanding generally. *Greatest of the great*—to be taken in connection with edifice.

And greatest..... littleness—and this church being the greatest of the great seems to despise the littleness and weakness of our nature. *Till growing.....contemplate*—**Expl.** At first this church seems to overwhelm our senses. But the senses themselves grow great in sympathy with this building at it were, and it is then that we are able to contemplate it perfectly. *Growing with its growth*—i. e. our nature expanding as all the glories unfold before our gaze. *We thus.....spirits*—we uplift, elevate our nature.

Stanza 159. Such being the case, our senses and intellect being narrow and limited, first pause and then enlighten yourself about the contents and details of this mighty structure and then you will be able to appreciate it better.

Be enlightened—make yourself acquainted with the details of the building. *There is more.....plan*—Explain thus

Enlightened appreciation, understanding based on familiarity with the details of the structure,—is better than foolish and blind praise. *There is more*—there is more use and worth. *In such a survey*—i.e. in an enlightened contemplation. *The sating gaze... ...pleased*—the stupid stare of childish wonder. *Awe.....place*—reverence inspired by the holiness of the place. *Sating*—i.e. satiating. *Mere praise. masters*—admiration excited by the artistic beauty of the place.

N. B. Byron wishes to mark a contrast. Enlightened appreciation of the place, he says, is the best tribute that we can pay to it. Such enlightened appreciation is better than (1) the sating gaze of foolish wonder, (2) the reverence of the pious and the devoted and (3) the aesthetic admiration of those who chatter of art.

Great masters—viz. those great artists who built this church. *Who could raise.. ...plan*—who could erect a structure such as even the great masters of ancient times could not have conceived. **N. B.** In Art it is the great ancient masters whom we generally praise most ; but here is a modern building, says the poet, such as even the great ancients could not have conceived.

The fountain depth—**Expl.** Here in this building, the very source and essence of sublimity is displayed. *And thence. sands*—The mind of man can derive its highest happiness and pleasure from the contemplation of this sort of sublimity. *And learn..... can*—From a contemplation of this building man can learn as to how far it is possible for human genius to go.

(15) Stanzas 160 to 163.

From St. Peter's the poet passes on to the other architectural glory of modern Rome viz. the Vatican

Stanza 160. A vivid picture of the Laocoon group as it exists in the Vatican gallery.

The Vatican—one of the famous Seven Hills of Rome ; *here* referring to the Vatican Palace—the vast and wonderful palace in which the Popes have dwelt since 1377. (It is said that the Vatican contains some 11,000 rooms, galleries and chapels, including the wonderful Sistine Chapel with the priceless paintings of Raphael.

See.....pain—See in the statue of Laocoon and his sons how pain and suffering can be invested with dignity . *Laocoon's*

torture—the statue of the tortured Laocoon. (Laocoon was a priest of Troy; and the legend is that, for having offended Poseidon, God of the sea, he and his two sons were pursued and devoured by serpents. There is a beautiful description of the story in Virgil's Aeneid and there is an immortal group in the Vatican which depicts the same scene.)

A father's love.... blending—This statue shows us a wonderful combination of parental love and mortal agony struggling with such patience as only gods can display. (The statue depicts Laocoon and his two sons and there is an expression of fearful suffering on the faces of all the figures.) *The coiling strain and gripe*—the tightening strain of the fierce coils of the serpents.

Vain.....clench—The efforts of the group are powerless against the fearful tightening of the serpents' hold; the clench of the old man's hand is powerless to resist their grasp. *The long envenomed chain*—the long chain of poison; here meaning the sinuous body of the poisonous serpents. *Rivets.....links*—tightens the coils of its body. *Enormous asp*—gigantic serpent: the word 'asp' is hardly justified but Byron excuses himself by quoting the example of Shakespeare. *Enforces.....pang*—causes fresh torture and suffering. *Stifles*—checks. *Gasp on gasp*—viz. on the part of the suffering victims.

Stanza 161. The statue of Apollo Belvedere. There is an air of triumph and exultation in this statue—an expression of beautiful disdain in its eye and nostril.

Lord.....bow—referring to the statue of Apollo Belvedere in the Vatican. It is believed that this statue is a marble copy of a more ancient bronze. The god is here represented as a vigorous youth, undraped, and in the attitude of one who has just discharged his arrow. *God of life*—because he was god of the art of healing; also god of pestilence.

God of poesy—he was the leader of the Muses and on that account called Musagetes *God of light*—because he was the Sun-god. *And brow.....fight*—an expression of triumphant elation shining in his face. *The shaft.....shot*—the arrow has just been discharged. (See note above.) *With an immortal vengeance*—sent forth with all the might that could be derived from a god's vengeance.

Majesty—stateliness. *In his eye...by*—Disdain, might, majesty, all these flash their full lightnings, in other words, expresses their

whole splendour and force in his eye and nostril. *Developing deity*—bringing out in that very expression of eye and nostril. the whole force of the godhead.

Stanza 162. But if there is an expression of utter scorn in his eye and nostril, in the form of the god there is that delicate beauty which great creative artists can produce only in their moments of highest inspiration.

Delicate—gracefully formed. *A dream.....love.....vision*—Take the whole in apposition with 'delicate form': a form of such delicacy and beauty as can never exist in reality and can be imagined only in the love-sick dream of some nymph longing for the embrace of a God. *A dream of love*—such a delicate form as can never dwell in this world and can only be imagined in dreams—the dreams of some love-sick nymph.

Some solitary nymph—some beautiful Goddess. *Whose breast above*—who longed for the embrace of a God. *And maddened vision*—and the fever of whose dream expressed itself in a vision like this. *Are exprest.....mood*—Connect the whole passage with 'in his delicate form.' The delicate form of the God is invested with all that imaginary, dream-like beauty which the mind sees only in its divinest moods of inspiration.

All that beauty.....with—all that grace and delicacy which ideal beauty viz. the fanciful imagination of the poet, ever enabled the poet or artist to see. *In its.....mood*—in its moments of highest inspiration. *When each...guest*—(Connect with 'unearthly mood.') 'Those moments of highest inspiration, when each idea of the artist's mind was like a portion of immortality and the whole together took the shape and image of a God.' (The poet is pictured as surrounded by god-like conceptions all of which coalesce together in order to produce the perfect beauty and image of a God—a god like the Appollo Belvedere of the statue.)

Each guest—each idea rising in the mind of the artist was like a guest coming straight from heaven. *And stood..... god*—and all these ideas surrounded him till they together focussed into the form of a god.

Stanza 163. If Prometheus stole fire from heaven in order to animate the figure of a lifeless man—that debt was repaid by this artist who animated the lifeless statue of a God.

Prometheus—the fabulous gaint who is said to have stolen fire from heaven and for this was punished with fearful torments.

If it be Prometheus.....glory—**Expl.** If Prometheus stole fire from heaven, that fire which torments us even now, then that debt was repaid by the artist who has invested this marble statue with eternal glory.

The fire.....endure—the fire which Prometheus stole for the purpose of breathing animation into our clay but which now is an instrument of pain for us. *It*—viz. this debt. *By him*—viz. by the sculptor. *Energy*—creative genius. *Which.....glory*—that creative genius which has enabled him to invest with undying glory this statue of Apollo. *Which, if.....thought*—The hand which moulded this statue may have been mortal but the genius which conceived it must have been divine.

And Time etc. etc.—Time which destroys so many things has imparted but additional beauty to it. *Hath hallowed it*—hath rendered it holier, more beautiful still. *Nor hath.....years*—Time has not left any mark of ravage upon this statue. *But... wrought*—The fire of genius which conceived this great work of art—that fire of genius still seems to breathe through it.

Stanza 164 to the end. The subject of Rome is finished and with that the poet's song. He is busy now gathering up the threads of his story, such as they are; and this he does in a series of exquisitely beautiful stanzas, the personal note being dominant all through

Stanzas 164 to 166.

The stage-figure of Harold is again introduced—only to make his final adieu. The mention of his name and of his coming disappearance from the stage suggests some reflections on death.

Stanza 164. If Harold ever was, he is now ceasing to be. These breathings are his last.

Pilgrim of my song—the wanderer who was the hero of my song. *The being.....past*—the central figure of my poem; the man upon whom my story is supposed to hinge. *He cometh..... long*—he is late in coming and he is tarrying long on the way. *He is no more*—he now ceases to exist. *These.....last*—these stanzas are the last expression of his feelings. *His wanderings done*—his journey is finished. *His visions etc.*—The sights which his imaginations called up are now fast fading from the mind. (Perhaps the poet wishes to imply that the tide of his inspiration is ebbing dry.)

If he was etc.—if Harold was ever a real personage, if he was anything but a creature of fancy. (And then the poet breaks off and says 'let me not discuss that question any further'.) *Aught but phantasy*—anything but a mere dream of the imagination. *Could be.....suffering*—could be recorded as a real living personage.

His shadow...mass—his image now fades away and mingles with the vast mass of dead and forgotten things.

N. B. The student will notice that this line is carried on to the next stanza, and grammatically completes its sense there. *Destruction*—here in the general sense of death and oblivion.

Stanza 165. It is sad to think how Death spreads its pall of oblivion over shadow, substance, life and all and how glory itself is not proof against it.

Which gathers shadow etc.—connect with 'destruction's mass' in l. 1476. *Which gathers.....shroud*—that destruction which spreads its shroud over shadow, substance, life, in fact over all those things which we possess in this world. *Shadow, substance etc.*—It is not simply the joys and blessings of life which are destroyed by Death; all joys, real and imaginary, in fact, every thing that life inherits falls a prey to the mortal shroud of Death.

Inherit—possess. *Mortal shroud*—canopy of death. *And spreads.....phantom*—(The same idea is further developed.) **Expl.** Death spreads upon shadow, substance and every thing its dim and universal pall, so that seen through its medium things look like spectres. *Dim.....pall*—viz. garment of oblivion; universal, because none escapes its sway. *Through which*—seen through the medium of which dim and universal pall. *Grow phantoms*—i. e. grow dim and indistinct like spectres. *And the cloud.....darkness*—(The same idea is further developed.) **Expl.**—With death a cloud of oblivion settles between us and everything that was considered joyous and radiant in life, so that even glory itself becomes dim and just hovers on the verge of total darkness.

And the cloud etc—**Constue thus**:—Between us and all which ever glowed (i. e. all the happy and beautiful things of the world) the cloud sinks (i. e. a cloud of oblivion descends.)

Glory's self.....twilight—till glory itself becomes dim, i. e. even glory becomes a forgotten memory. *Melancholy halo*—faintly preceptible circle of light.

Scarce allowed.....darkness—which is only dimly seen as hovering on the outskirts of darkness. **N.B.** Even glory's crown is diminished by Death. Her radiance is scarcely perceived or, if perceived, it looks like a faint fringe of twilight on the border of total darkness.

Rays.....graze—to be taken in apposition with 'halo.' **Expl.** This diminished brilliance and glory is a sad thing to contemplate, for it distracts our attention and makes us gaze with longing eyes into the gulf of futurity. It will be noticed that the idea expressed in the later part of this stanza is carried over to the next stanza. *Distract the graze*—perplex and disturb the mind.

Stanza 166 The consideration that even glory may not survive death sets us thinking as to what may happen to us after death.

N. B. What the poet has said in the former stanza amouns to this : Death spreads its pall of forgetfulness over all mortal things. With death a cloud settles between us and the things we loved in this world, so that even glory and fame are deprived of their radiance and cast but a dim and melancholy light.

Now, in this stanza, the poet takes up the strain of his thought and carries it a step further. He says : the consideration that even the lustre of glory is diminished by death leads us to speculate on what may happen after death. It makes us dream of fame and incites us to clear away from our name any dust that may have gathered upon it forgetful of the fact that this name we shall hear never more again. But there is consolation in this very fact viz. that just as our name perishes with death, so also our possibilities of suffering must now came to an end.

Send us—connect with 'rays' in line 1484. (It is the diminished rays of glory which 'send us paying' etc.)

Prying into the abyss—speculating about what may happen after death.

To gather etc—**Construe** thus : The diminished rays of glory send us prying into the abyss, *in order.* (1) to gather what we shall be after death, (2) to dream of fame, (3) to wipe the dust from off our name.

To gather—to learn, to understand. *When the frame... essence*—when this body will be reduced to utter nothingness ; when the body will be reduced to a state which is worse even than its present wretchedness. (The body is wretched as it is

but when it is reduced to ashes after death, it will be worse still.

And wipe.....name—(Connect with 'send us prying' above); in other words, it is curiosity about what may happen after death which prompts us to clear our reputation from any dust that may have gathered upon it.

We never.....hear—(Here is a touch of the poet's cynicism. We are busy clearing off the dust from our name—forgetful of the fact that with death this name itself will perish.

But never more.....same—There is a gap in the development of the poet's thought; but we may bring out his meaning thus: There may be a pang in the idea that we shall never more hear our name but at the same time there is consolation also in the thought; for if we die, we shall never more have to suffer.

It is enough.....gore—The sufferings of *one* life are enough to bear; one would not desire a repetition of the same. *Once*—in this one life. *Fardels of the heart*—the burdens and troubles of the heart. *The heart.....gore*—the heart which suffers so much that its sweat is like blood.

Stanzas 167 to 172.

From considerations of death in general the poet passes on to deal with the death of Princess Charlotte.

N. B. Owing to the blindness and madness of George III. the Prince of Wales, who was one of the most dissolute and unprincipled figures of the time, was now acting as the Regent. He had only one daughter, Princess Charlotte, a gracious and accomplished girl and from whom much was expected. But she died in November 1817, the year after her marriage, in giving birth to a child. Her death was the occasion of universal grief.

Stanza 167. A low murmur as from many voices proceeds from the far distance; the graves are opened and a royal victim is disclosed.

Fourth from the abyss—**N. B.** Mr. Tozer says that 'abyss' here is the same as the 'abyss' in l. 1486, in which case it would mean the abyss of the future world. But I am utterly unable to accept this explanation, which would be pointless as referring to the universal grief of the English people on the death of Princess Charlotte. Rather 'abyss' here generally means 'dim and far distance,'

A voice—rather the confused murmur of many voices. *A long sound*—a long drawn melancholy moan. *When a nation...* ...*wound*—when a whole people has been cut to the heart. *Immedicable wound*—a suffering that cannot be healed.

Storm and darkness—storm and darkness of universal grief. *Through storm.....relief*—**Expl.** the substance thus: The whole earth seems to open and to disclose dead bodies buried thick below; and one of these dead bodies seems like that of a royal personage but one who has not yet been crowned. (Of course, the reference is to Princess Charlotte.

Yawns.....ground—The earth seems to be rent in twain and to open up a wide chasm. *The gulf.....phantoms*—and this wide chasm seems to be strewn thick with the figures of the dead. *But the chief.....discrowned*—but of the dead figures so discovered the principal one seems to be a royal personage, though she has not yet been crowned. *With maternal grief.....relief*—she gave birth to a dead child and died shortly afterwards.

Stanza 168. You died in child birth and with you fled the promised joy of our people.

Scion—descendant and representative of a long line of princess and chiefs. *Many nations*—treating the English, Scotch and Irish as separate nations. (We may be pretty sure that Byron was not thinking of the colonies or subject-nations.) *Fond hope etc*—you on whom so many different nations built their hopes.

Forget thee—forget to take toll of your life. *And lay low*... ...*head*—Could not death be content with the destruction of some less exalted personage? *While thy heart still blend*—while you were still alive. *Mother of a moment*—because you also died immediately afterwards. *Death.....ever*—Thy sorrow at having lost thy babe was quickly hushed in thy own death. *Promised joy*—the happiness which our people expected to enjoy when you should be sovereign.

With the.....cloy—**Expl.** With you died the present happiness of our people as well as their future expectation of happiness, that expectation of happiness which was so excessive that it seemed to be too much.

Stanza 169. Men, who do not weep for kings, wept for you.—Liberty which conceived some hopes from your prospective reign will mourn for you.

Bring forth—produce children. *Peasants.....safely*—the idea is incomplete.—Peasants are delivered of their children safely ; could not you, a royal person, do the same ? *Can it be etc*—Is it possible that you are really dead ? *Those.....Kings*—i. e. stern republicans—people who do not care for monarchy. *Freedom's heart*—heart of the people who cared for freedom. *Grown heavy*—i. e. sad at the thought of your death..

Freedom's heart.....one—**Expl.** The cause of Liberty has suffered many losses ; but she had built her hopes on you. So, now that you are dead, she will cease to brood upon her other losses and mourn only for you. *Ceased.....one*—In grieving for you, she will cease to brood upon her own grief.

Had poured.....thee—had offered up prayers for your safety. *Over thy head Iris*—her Iris shines over your head. In other words, her hopes of happiness and brightness are centred upon you. (The Iris or rainbow is closely associated with thoughts of hope and comfort.) *Lonely lord*—This was Prince Leopold of Saxe Coburg who had been married to Princess Charlotte and who, it will be interesting to notice, was uncle of Queen Victoria *Husband of a year*—he had been married only in May 1816. *The father of the dead*—because the babe died at birth.

Stanza 170 (The same idea is continued). We rested our hopes entirely upon her and now with her death our hopes are gone.

Of sack cloth etc—There was a promise of future sorrow in your very marriage. (Sackcloth and ashes are proverbially associated with mourning.) *Thy bridal's fruit &c*—Sorrow and grief are the only fruits of your marriage. *The love of millions*—she, who was an object of love to many millions. *How we...her*—how we built all our hopes of future happiness upon her prospective reign. (We thought that she would succeed her grandfather and that her reign would be one of peace, prosperity and freedom.)

Though it.....seed—**Expl.** No doubt we knew that we ourselves might die before she came to reign ; but we fondly thought that our children would be ruled over by her son and would obey him and in that hope we blessed her and her expected issue. *It*—futurity. *Though...bones*—though we knew that we would be in our graves before that futurity came. *Fondly*—foolishly, *Whose promise.....eyes*—Just as stars are welcome to the shepherd's eyes, so the promise of issue from her was a welcome to our heart. *It was.....beamed*—but this promise was a

delusion. What seemed to be a star was but a meteor or shooting star. (The metaphor of the star is continued)

Stanza 171. She is happy in death; she is beyond the reach of earthly sorrows and disappointments.

Woe.....her—It is not she but we who are miserable. (It is life that is miserable and not death; for death means release from the sufferings of life, specially of those sufferings which are inevitable in the life of sovereigns.) *She sleeps well*—sleeps happily. *The fickle.....breath*—Here follows an enumeration of those particular evils to which sovereigns are specially liable. (The sentence completes itself grammatically in the first line of the next stanza.) *The fickle reek etc*—In other words, being dead; she is now beyond the reach of these evils. *Fickle..... breath*—the uncertainty and changefulness of popular favour. (*Reek*—smoke, vapour.) *Popular breath*—the approbation of the 'fool multitude. *The tongue.....counsel*—the treachery of false advisers. *The false oracle.....madness*—that treachery of false advice which has in every age been the special misfortune of monarchy and which has banded the common people against them.

False oracle—same as 'the tongue of hollow counsel.' *Which years*—that misfortune of evil and treacherous counsel which, from the early dawn of monarchy, has ever been fatal to the cause of Princes. *The birth of monarchy*—i. e. the origin of monarchy. *Hath rung.....years*—have been fatal to the cause of princes; have sounded death-knell in their ears. *Overstrung nations*—nations driven to despair viz. by the oppression of princes and their evil counsellors. *Have armed in madness*—have risen up in frenzy and rebelled against their sovereigns. *The strange... ...sooner or late*—that strange fatality which dogs the steps of princes and which sooner or later crushes them down under its weight. (Byron in his own note refers to the strange fatality which has overtaken so many princes. Mary was executed. Elizabeth died of broken heart. Louis XIV died bankrupt in fame and fortune while worst of all Napoleon *lives* a prisoner.) *Which tumbles.....sovereigns*—which overthrows the most powerful kings from their thrones.

Hath.....late—**Expl.** Kings seem to be great, powerful and exceedingly happy; but fate, as if to balance their happiness, has put into the opposing scale the strange fatality which sooner or later crushes them down. *Their blind omnipotence*—the excessive power which monarchs possess.

Stanza 172. The poet repudiates the suggestions put forth in the last stanza. Addressing Princess Charlotte, he says, 'you were so good and fair that these common calamities of Princes could not have overtaken you.'

Our hearts deny it—we refuse to believe that you could have been overtaken by these common misfortunes. *Good without effort*—naturally, spontaneously good. *Great.....foe*—great from rank and power and yet exciting no envy. *But now*—only this moment. *Now there*—i, e. in the grave. *How many.....tear*—How many bonds of affection and homage were snapped asunder by this premature death! *How many ties*—viz. the ties of husband and wife between Leopold and Charlotte; of father and daughter between the Regent and the Princess; of subject and sovereign between the Princess and her millions of people.

From thy sire's.. ...earthquake—**Expl.** One eletric shock of despair and grief went through the vast mass of people from the king to his meanest subjects. *Whose shock.....earthquake*—that grief which was as sudden and heavy as the shock of an earthquake. *Which loved.....best*—which loved you so much that each one seemed to have loved you best. (They all loved you so greatly that no one could boast that his love for you was greater than that of any other.)

Stanzas 173 to 178.

The poet is preparing to bid us farewell; so he takes us to the summit of the Alban Mountain from where a wide and beautiful view can be obtained, skirted in the far distance by the blue line of the sea.

Stanza 173. Nemi is embosomed so deep in the midst of woods that its glassy lake is unruffled by winds.

Lo, Nemi etc—Byron wants to part from us with a last glimpse of the sea; and to obtain this glimpse, he takes us to Alban Hills—a low volcanic range not far from Rome and unconnected with any other mountain chain. Two of the extinct craters of this range are now occupied by lakes: one is the lake of Nemi and the other is the Alban lake mentioned in the next. stanza.

Navelled—i. e. embosomed, placed deep. *Navelled...so far*—embosomed in such a deep recess of the woods. *Uprooting wind*—tempestuous wind. *Which spills.....boundary*—which makes the ocean overflow its banks. *And bears.....skies*—and carries the foam of the seas as high as the skies.

Reluctant.....lake—Even the force of tempestuous blasts is powerless to ruffle the glassy surface of this lake, it is embosomed so deep in the midst of hills. (The lake is so very closely and thickly encirculed by trees that it does not feel the force of tempests.)

And calm.....snake—a beautiful simile. *The lake is calm*—as calm as deep-seated hatred, as calm as the sleep of a coiled serpent. *Cherished hate*—feeling of hatred settled deep in the mind but which does not manifest itself outwardly. *A cold settled aspect*—a cold and undisturbed countenance. *Nought can shake*—which is ruffled by nothing. *All.....snake*—Just as a snake sleeps self-contained, coiling its body up within itself, as it were, so the lake coils up its waters within itself and sleeps in peace.

Stanza 174. A description of the beautiful view that unfolds itself from the top of the Alban Mount.

And near—i. e. near the lake of Nemi. *Albano's.....waves*—the lake of Albano which is scarcely divided by a single ridge from the lake of Nemi. *From a sister valley*—the two lakes occupy two craters which are separated only by a single cordon of rock. *Laves*—washes, bathes.

And the broad.....empire—**Expl.** In the distance can be seen a broad, similing land, the Latin coast—that Latin coast where commenced the war described in Virgil's Epic about 'Arms and the Man'—that man whose re-ascending star rose over an empire.

The epic war—as described in Virgil's poem. Æneas, a Trojan Prince, after the ruin and destruction of Troy, sailed away from his native city and reached the Latin coast. There he defeated the native princes and was the founder of the majesty and greatness of Rome.

Arms and the man—these are the opening words of Virgil's Epic—'Arms and the Man I sing.' *Whose reascending &c.*—connect with 'man' in 'Arms and the man'; that man whose star &c.

Re-ascending star—The idea is that the star of Aeneas, having set in Troy, reascended in Italy and rose upon an empire i. e. led to the foundation of an empire. *Beneath.....Rome*—Cicero had a country-home at Tusculum to the north of the Alban Hill.

Yon.....mountains—referring to the chain of the Appenines

which can be seen from the top of the Alban Mt. (The Sabine farm, which was the rural retreat of Horace, was in one of the valleys of the Appenine chain.) *Girdling*—circling, enclosing *Intercepts the sight*—shuts out the prospect. *The Sabine farm*—so called because it was situated in the Sabine country—The Sabines were an ancient Italian people. *Weary bird*—Horace, tired with the whirl of town-life at Rome.

Stanza 176. I see the Mediterranean once again—that Mediterranean sea which we followed as far as the Symplegades, when last we saw it in company with Harold.

But I forget it—I forget that my song is drawing to a close and therefore, I must not linger by the way. *My pilgrim*—i e Harold. *My pilgrim.....won*—Harold has reached the goal of his journey (perhaps Rome being the goal.) *So let it be*—I accept the fact that he and I must part. *His task.....done*—his task is over because he has reached Rome: my task is over because I have finished this poem.

Breaks.....me—suddenly appears before our view. *Our friend of youth*—that ocean in which we both have taken delight since youth. *Which...Symplegades*—The last time that we beheld the Mediterranean Sea from Gibralter we pursued it till we came to the place where the Bosphorus opens upon the Black Sea. **N. B.** Byron is referring to the sight of the Mediterranean which he had in 1810. Of course, since then he must have seen the Mediterranean often again; but that was the last time when he saw it together with Harold. *Calpe's rock*—Gibralter. *Euxine*—Black Sea.

Stanza 176. Years, not many but dark with suffering and therefore long, have passed over my head since then; yet my life has not been all a failure, for I still can take delight in nature.

The blue Symplegades—the Strait of Bosphorus.—The Symplegades was the name given by the ancients to two narrow islands on two sides of this strait, one near the Asiatic and the other near the European coast.

Long—because crowded with suffering and therefore hard to pass. *Have done.... .both*—have left the traces of their ravage upon me and upon Harold. *Have left us.....begun*—**Expl.** We are as bankrupt to-day in heart and hope, in affection and happiness, as we were in those days. The student will notice that Byron involves Childe Harold in his sufferings, thus emphasing his sense of the identity of the two.

Some suffering.....begun—So far as desolation of the heart is concerned, I am to-day where I was when I first commenced my wanderings. (No doubt Byron had been married in the meantime and had received some glimpse of domestic happiness ; but that marriage too had now ended in dissolution.)

Yet.....run—yet my life has not been altogether a failure. *It is here*—referring to his abiding love of nature. (I have received my reward and that reward is that I can still be gladdened by the beauty of nature.) *The sun*—as typical of the beauty of nature. *And reap... ..clear*—The joy which I still derive from nature is as unclouded as if there had been no such thing as man to destroy my happiness. **Expl.** No doubt the presence of humanity is the alloy in our happiness ; but standing before the unclouded face of nature I seem almost to forget about that alloy.

Stanza 177. How I wish that the desert were my dwelling place, with one fair spirit for my only companion ! Could not the elements grant me this one boon ?

Desert—i.e. the unpeopled desert. *Oh ! that place*—Byron wishes, perhaps with some little affectation, to mark his hatred of humanity. 'I wish that I could be far away from the race of man.'

One fair spirit—one beloved and lovely companion. *For my minister*—i.e. to minister to my happiness. *All forget*—wholly forget. *Elements*—referring to the forces and powers of nature. *Exalted*—uplifted, ennobled. *Ennobling stir*—rush and turmoil. *In whose.....exalted*—you, whose rushing and tumultuous forces seem to uplift and elevate my spirit.

Can ye.....being—Can you not combine your forces in order to endow me with such a creature ? *Do I.....shot*—Am I mistaken in supposing that such a lovely being may be found in many places ? *Though... ..lot*—though it may not be in our fortune to converse with them. *With them to converse*—i e. to know them ; to be acquainted with them.

Stanza 178. There is a pleasure in nature which nothing can equal I love man but I love nature more.

A pleasure—i. e. a pleasure which is matchless, a pleasure to which nothing can be compared.

Rapture—i. e. an ecstacy of delight. *There is a society..... intrudes*—There is society where man never thrusts himself.

Almost an oxymoron because *society* generally means the companionship of man.)

There is society intrudes—One can enjoy all the fruits of companionship and yet not be troubled by the voice of man.

Music in its roar—one can hear delightful music in the roar of the sea-waves.

I love not.....all canceal—**Expl.** I return with added love for nature from these my secret communings with her—communings in which I strive to escape from my proper self and mingle with the being of the universe.

Our interviews—my secret communings with the soul of nature. *I love not.....interviews*—**Expl.** From these secret communings with nature I return, not with less love for man but with added love for nature. *In which before*—In these secret communings with nature I wish to escape from my own self—from what I *am* as well as from what I *was*.

To mingle with the universe—to merge in the soul of the universe; to identify myself with the soul of nature. *And feel conceal*—**Expl.** In these communings with nature I seek to identify myself with her secret essence, I seek to feel a joy which it is beyond my power to express, but which I never tried to conceal. (No words of mine can adequately express the joy that I feel in nature; but all the same, I shall never seek to conceal such joy.)

(9) Stanzas 179 to 186.

Byron's stately apostrophe to the Ocean.—In stanzas of roll eloquence and grandeur, the poet greets the ocean and takes leave of the reader.

Stanza 179. Man's power is bounded by the shore; the sea cares nothing for his strength.

Roll on—i. e. continue to roll as you have rolled on since the beginning of creation. *Sweep.....vain*—in vain, because they can never leave any permanent impression upon your surface. *Man marks etc*—The earth is strewn thick with the ravages wrought by the hand of man. (Man is savage and finds delight in destruction; and the whole earth is scattered thick with the marks of his ruin.) *His control etc*—but his fury is baffled by the sea; his power is bounded by the shore.

Watery plain—bosom of the sea. *All thy deed*—and not the deed of man. *Upon.....deed*—There are wrecks also on the sea, but these wrecks are the wrecks *of man* and *not by man*. (Man is not their author but their victim.)

Man's ravage—ravage inflicted by man. *His own*—his own ravage; viz. ravage done to him. *Nor doth.....own*—There are marks of ravage on the bosom of the sea also; but they are marks of the ravage done not *by* man but *to* man.

When for a moment.....depths—**N. B.** The construction is loose but the meaning is perfectly clear. Grammatically 'for a moment' connects with 'sinks' so that the meaning would seem to be—'he sinks for a moment'; but of course, the meaning is far from being that. Rather the meaning is: 'he remains suspended in the bosom of the water for a moment and then sinks.'

Sinks.....groan—i. e. sinks with a groan and sends up bubbles as he sinks. *Unknelled etc.*—The poet intends to mark the loneliness and helplessness of death at sea. *Unknelled*—with no one to ring his death-bell. *Uncoffined*—the sea waves being his only coffin.

Stanza 180. The same idea is continued. Man is powerless against the sea which breaks him like a toy.

His steps.....paths—you do not bear the mark of his footsteps; he is unable to leave prints of his feet upon your bosom. *Thy fields.....him*—man is the universal spoliater, yet he is unable to despoil you of your riches. *Dost arise*—i. e. arise in all the might and majesty of your wrath; shake him off from you as if he were a drop of rain, *The vile strength*—base and mean strength; so called because man uses it for purposes of destruction. *Spurning him*—throwing him off; kicking him away.

And sendest to earth—**Expl.** You make him shiver with your cold spray and send him howling to his gods for mercy. But though he takes the name of his gods on his lips, yet in his heart of heart he thinks that his hope of safety lies not in the mercy of the gods but in the chance of there being some port or bay; and then at last you dash him against the earth and thus break him to pieces.

Shiver.....spray—you toss him upon your waves and make him shiver by sprinkling him with the chilly foam of your waves.

And howling to his gods—As you toss him upon your bosom he goes whining for protection to his gods.

Where.....bay—**N. B** The expression is extremely condensed and the difficulty lies with the word 'where.' The underlying meaning of the poet can be thus brought out: 'he goes howling to his gods; but though he takes the name of the latter on his lips, yet in his heart he trusts for safety not to the mercy of god at all but to the off-chance of there being some port or harbour near.'

Haply—perhaps, perchance. *There let him lay*—of course "lay" is hopelessly wrong. ('A crying anacoluthon' as Mathew Arnold calls it. It should be 'lie.')

Stanza 181. The armed fleets which strike terror into the heart of nations are themselves overwhelmed, as they toss in thy yeast of waves.

Armaments—armed fleets. *Which.....cities*—which strike like thunderbolt against the walls of fortified cities. *Quake*—tremble with fear. *Oak leviathans*—huge, gigantic ships. *Whose huge.....thee*—i. e. ships, the hugeness of whose bulk makes man vain enough to think that he has conquered you. (Man is so proud of having built these huge ships that he thinks that he has been able to master the sea.) *Arbiter of war*—controller of the destinies of war. *These are.....toys*—but these huge ships and battle-fleets, they are as if play things unto you.

As the snowy.....waves—As the snow-flake melts and disappears in a moment, so these fleets and armadas also disappear into your bosom in a moment. *Thy yeast of waves*—the frothing mass of your waters, the churning whirlpool of your waves. *Which mar.....Trafalgar*—which could quickly destroy fleets like the Armada or the navy that conquered at Trafalgar. *Armada's pride*—a huge fleet like the Armada which threatened to invade England in 1589. *The spoils of Trafalgar*—the triumphant English fleet which conquered at Trafalgar (1805.)

Stanza 182. The empires which stood on thy shores have changed and are changing:—but thou art changeless.

Are empires—They *were* empires and many of them still *continue to be* empires; but they have changed in all else i.e. they have changed masters, boundaries, influence—everything. *Assyria etc.*—Byron is thinking of the empires which stood on the Mediterranean. *Assyria*—the Babylonian Empire, the oldest known to us. *Carthage*—The Empire of Carthage was more commercial than territorial. Carthage declined as Rome rose. *Washed them power*—brought power to thy shores; in other

words, they were great because they stood by the sea-shore and thus had facilities for commerce as well as military expansion. *Thy waters.....since*—So long as they were free you made them great; and even afterwards you made them great under their tyrants. *Their shores.....savage*—Byron is speaking of the change that has come over these empires; they were great once but now they obey strangers, slaves or savages.

The stranger—referring to Rome which was now under the power of the Austrians. *Savage*—referring to the case of Greece which was now under the power of the savage Turks. *Not so thou*—But though these empires have changed, you are changeless. *Unchangeable.....play*—**Expl.** If you are changed at all, you are changed only by your own action—the wild tossing and heaving of your waves. *Time.....brow*—you are ever young, you will never grow old. Time which writes wrinkles on the brows of all can write no wrinkle upon thy brow. (The metaphor is extremely beautiful. Of course, the reference is to the blue waters of the sea which will never bear the trace or mark of any line upon them.) *Such.....now*—you are now just as you were in the infancy of creation.

Stanza 183. You are the mirror of the Almighty, the image of eternity

Thou glorious.....tempests—Byron's imagination reaches its climax in majestic lines like these. The student will notice that Byron is great in passages, never as a whole. 'Great and glorious as you are, you seem a fit mirror where the Almighty can behold His face.'

Where.....tempest—**N. B.** The Almighty's form is imaged upon the bosom of the waves; and what form does the image take? It takes the form of tempests.

In all time.....Invisible—You pass through many varieties of being; you assume many varieties of expression; but in all your expressions, you are as infinite and boundless as the very throne and image of God.

In all time—i. e. in all varieties of your form. *Calm or convulsed*—whether you are calm or whether you are convulsed. *Convulsed*—i. e. with storms. *Icing.....heaving*—whether you are encrusted with ice as near the Poles, or whether you are warm or hot as in the torrid Zone. *Dark-heaving*—i e. swelling with an under-current of volcanic fury. *Boundless, endless*—in other words, you are always the same infinite and limitless. *Even*

.....made—Thou art so great that even out of thy mud and filth gigantic sea-monsters are formed. *Each zone*—every climate, every country. *Thou goest forth*—you roll and heave about the world. *Dread.....alone*—terrible, immeasurable, solitary. (The sea is called *alone* because it is one, unique.)

Stanza 184. I loved you even when I was a child and played with your manes.

On thy breast to be—i. e. to swim upon your waters. *My joy to me*—The sport in which I took the greatest delight in youth was to swim upon the sea. *Borne.....onward*—to swim so that I may be carried forward like one of the bubbles upon your breast. *Wanton'd breakers*—i. e. played and sported with your waves. *Were a delight*—were a source of delight.

Freshening sea—the sea gathering force under the breath of storm. *If the freshening...fear*—When you gathered force under the breath of storms, no doubt you became terrible to me ; but even that terror was mingled with joy. *A child of thee*—one born upon thy bosom, as it were.

Trusted.....near—I placed my whole trust in you, whether in the seas of my native land or in foreign seas. *Laid.....mane*—I played with your waves as one may play with the manes of an unbroken colt. *As I do here*—Of course, this must not be taken literally. Byron was now on the top of the Alban Hills and from there it was not possible for him to lay his hands on the mane of the sea.

Stanza 185. My task is done ; what is writ is writ. I wish that it had been worthier ; but my inspiration is ebbing.

My theme.....echo—My subject is finished ; it has trailed off to a mere echo. In other words, the force of inspiration which had carried me hitherto has now faded from my breast.

It is.....dream—It is proper that the spell of this protracted dream should now cease ; in other words, it is now time that the enchantment under which I have been working should lose its power.

The torch.....extinguished—I shall deliberately quench the power of inspiration. *Which lamp*—which has enabled me to write this verse.

What is writ is writ—I leave my work as it is with all its imperfections upon its head. (In other words, I am fully consci-

ous of the imperfections of my work but am powerless to make them better. The reader may take them as he finds them.)

Would.....worthier—I wish that this verse had been better in quality. *I am...been*—I do not now possess the powers which I once possessed.

My visions.....me—**Expl.** The visions which I saw through my imagination have become less clear and tangible to me now, in other words, my faculty of poetic vision has perceptibly diminished.

The glow.....dwelt—the power of inspiration which once dwelt in my bosom. *Is fluttering low*—is burning with a faint feeble light.

Stanza 186. Farewell to the reader. If there is any pain in the story let it rest with me. If there is any profit, let it go with you.

A word.....linger—Farewell is a word of leave-taking ; but it always makes us delay over the leave-taking. (We wish to protract the leave-taking as long as we can),

Makes us linger—as if disinclined to part. *Yet farewell*—But though there is a temptation to linger, yet we must part *Who have.....last*—who have followed the pilgrim in all his wanderings ; i.e. you who have read my poem from beginning to end. *If in your memories.....his*—if you remember even one of the thoughts which he has thought ; in other words, if you remember one line of this verse. *If one.....recollection*—if one single recollection of the man dwells in your mind.

Not in vain.....shell—then he has not been a pilgrim in vain. (This is all an expression of the poet's modesty. My writing has not been in vain, he says, if you remember one single thought or one single image of my poem.)

Sandal shoon and scollop-shell—badges of Christian pilgrims in the middle ages. *With him.....were*—If there was any pang of sorrow in his verse, let it go with Harold ; in other words, let it rest with the poet. *With you.....strain*—but if there was any profit in the verse, let it remain with you, reader.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

On

CANTO IV.

Q. 1. *How would you characterize Byron's treatment of his hero in the last canto?*

—The answer may be given in one word—the hero disappears from view altogether; or if he emerges on one single occasion (in stanza 164), he emerges only in order to be given a decent exit. As for the rest the poet speaks throughout in his own person. It is he who beholds Venice 'rising like a sea-Cybele with her tiara of proud towers': it is he who stands awe-struck before the mighty ruins of the Coliseum; it is he who greets the ocean from the top of Albano's height; and it is he who bids the reader farewell in verses of tender and exquisite pathos.

In the prefatory epistle addressed to John Hobhouse, Byron seeks to explain this change in the treatment of the hero. "I had become weary", he says, "of drawing a line which every one seemed determined not to perceive: it was in vain that I asserted and imagined that I had drawn a distinction between the author and the pilgrim; and the very anxiety to preserve this difference and disappointment at finding it unavailing *so far crushed my efforts in the composition* that I determined to abandon it altogether."

But the reason here given is far from being adequate or satisfactory. The fact rather is that there is a sincerity and intensity of passion in the fourth canto with which no sort of pretence is quite compatible; and after all, to imagine a distinction between himself and his hero was but the sorriest of pretences.

Q. 2. *What are the points of superiority in the last two cantos of Childe Harold? and specially in the 4th canto?*

[See *Introduction*, pp. XXXVII, XXXVIII.]—It is in the added sincerity of passion that the chief point of superiority lies; also in the added strength and intensity of emotion. The poet evidently feels more deeply and keenly than before; and

his power of giving expression to his feelings has also gained in maturity and force.

But there is another and deeper reason for the excellence and superiority of the 4th canto. Evidently, neither nature nor man made such forcible appeal to the genius of Byron as rich historical associations ; and he has an abundant stock of such associations when treading upon the consecrated ground of Italy. Venice brings back to his mind the long and glorious roll of its past history ; Arqua suggests Petrarch ; Ferrara calls back memories of Ariosto and Tasso ; Florence is replete with fragrant recollections of the mighty dead ; while Rome is the treasury and store-house of the world's past. Thus it is in dealing with the star-like glories of Rome that Byron reaches the topmost height of his poetical powers and shines forth at his best and truest.

Q. 3. (*a*) *What is Byron's attitude towards nature, specially as contrasted with man ?*

(*b*) *Reproduce Byron's description of an Italian sunset, of Clitumnus and Terni.*

(*a*) [See *notes* pp 75, 76 ; also stanzas 177, 178]

—Byron has expressed his attitude in one monumental line : I love not man the less but Nature more. But even this sentiment is hardly sincere enough ; and one may be permitted to doubt the love of humanity which the poet here professes. In fact the poet had developed by this time a real cynicism of nature ; and intercourse with the kindly race of man was apt to make him sick and disgusted. Hence, we have a far deeper and far more genuine expression of his intimate views when he says that "there is a pleasure in the pathless woods, a rapture in the lonely shore and a music in the roar of the sea" to which nothing in human society can be quite the equal. Nature enables him, he further says, to steal from what he is and what he *may have been* in the past and on that account, again, is all the dearer to him.

(*b*)—The description of an Italian sunset is the most elaborate piece of nature-painting that we have in this canto. (See *notes*, pp. 120, 121.) Byron notices the following points in his description :

1. The sky is free from clouds ; but in the west, all the bright and iridiscent hues of the rainbow seem to have become fused into one molten mass of colour and light.

2. The pale crescent moon with a single star by her side has risen in the east but seems powerless to contend against the sea of colour and light heaving in the western horizon.

3. Thus day and night seem to be still contending for mastery though the sun has set till Nature, re-asserting her sway, makes light prevail and all is gray.

—Clitumnus is as fair and pure and transparent as any crystal fountain that may be made her favourite haunt by a river-nymph. The milk-white steer still feed upon the grassy banks of the stream as once they did in the days of Virgil, while the small fishes leap and the water-lily sails in the waters of the river; and near by is a small temple, delicately beautiful, which seems to be in perfect keeping with the genius of the place.

—As for *Terni*, see *notes*, p. 156. (The cataract pours, in a huge column of water, down the steep sides of wave-worn precipice. It falls with thundering noise into a gulf below where it boils and eddies so that a fine spray rises into the sky from its churning mass and comes down again in the shape of fine rain.)

Q. 4. (a) *Summarize Byron's remarks on Venice.*

(b) *What is it that strikes Byron more specially about the city?*

(a) Venice looks like a sea-Cybele as she rises in 'airy distance' 'with her tiara of proud towers.' And as the poet gazes upon the city with its wonderful and dream-like beauty, the memory of a thousand years of glory and power seems to be brooding over the walls like some vast canopy and to be lit up with a ray of the past glory of Venice. And as the poet continues to muse upon the sight before him, he is inevitably reminded of how Venice once was the ruler of the waters and their powers, how 'her daughters had their dower from the spoil of empires' and how 'the exhaustless East poured into her lap all gems in sparkling showers.' But the glory of Venice is altogether of the past. Once she was 'the pleasant place of all festivity, the revel of the earth, the masque of Italy'. But 'her palaces are crumbling to the shore', 'music meets not always the ear' and she is the slave of foreign masters. Her ruin, the poet concludes, is shameful to the nations—chiefly to Britain.

But ruined as she is, Venice is still dear to the poet's heart, perhaps dearer from her very woes. Even now, there is food

for eye and mind in Venice, and the poet cannot forget that some of the happiest hours of his life caught their tone and colour from her.

(b) What strikes the poet more specially about Venice is the contrast between what *was* and what *is*. The 'Austrian reigns' where once 'the Suabian sued': 'an emperor tramples where once an emperor hath knelt'. The Lion of St. Mark still stands but it stands as in mockery of its former power. The bronze steeds of St. Mark still glow in all their brightness and beauty; but Doria's menace has come to pass, they are now bridled. The Adriatic is 'spouseless'; the Bucentaur 'lies rotting unrestored'; the Gondolier rows songless; and 'in Venice Tasso's echoes are no more.'—How have the mighty fallen!

Q. 5. *How does Byron apostrophize* (a) *Italy generally and* (b) *Rome particularly?*

[For *Italy*, see St. 26, also stanzas 42-47. For *Rome*, see stanzas 78-82.]

(a) Once Rome was the republic of kings and Italy shone with the reflected glory of Rome. Those days of glory have gone; but even now Italy is 'the garden of the world' 'the home of all art yields and Nature can decree'. Would that it were otherwise! It is her fatal gift of beauty which has been the cause of all her misfortunes in the past as well as in the present. Would that she had been less lovely and more powerful! More powerful, she could have beaten back her foes; less lovely she would have been less desired and would not have tempted hostile hordes to pour from over the Po or down the steep sides of the Alps.

But even in her decay, Italy has claims upon our gratitude and love. She is 'the mother of arts' and 'the parent of our religion.' Europe will one day repent of her parricide and redeem her from capitivity.

(6) Rome is the Niobe of nations, the mother of dead empires. Orphaned and destitute herself she has a charm for the orphans of the heart who must forget their puny woes in the presence of Rome's mighty desolation.

The Goth, the Christian, Time, War, Flood and Fire—all the destructive agencies of the world have wreaked their fury upon the seven-hilled city's pride. She has seen all her glories expiring star by star; and today she is just a chaos of ruins. But

our ignorance is so complete that in this wilderness of desolation we can recognize and identify nothing with any surety.

Q. 6. *Summarize Byron's remarks on* (*a*) *Tasso,* (*b*) *Ariosto and* (*c*) *on the holy dust which is and is not buried in Santa Croce's precincts.*

(*a*) For Tasso, see *notes*, pp. 27, 28. Byron throughout proceeds upon the wrong supposition that Tasso was deeply injured by antique brood of Este and he draws a stinging contrast between the fate of the Estes and of the poet whom they tortured and whose association with them is their only claim to remembrance. Tasso, he says, is the glory and shame of the house of Este—their *glory* because of his immortal verse which shed lustre upon their court and their *shame* because of the torture which they inflicted upon him. Alfonso thought perhaps to quench the might of his genius by immuring him in an asylum; but the tears and praises of all time wait upon him, while, as for the duke—his connection with the poet gives him the only claim to our remembrance.

(*b*) Ariosto was not unequal to Tasso; he was the bard of chivalry, the southern Scott. He called forth a new creation with his 'magic line' and 'sang lady's love and war, romance and knightly worth.' The crown of iron laurel with which Ariosto's bust was crowned was rent by lightning: but no bolt of thunder can cleave the laurel wreath of his glory.

(*c*) The 'dust' which lies buried in Santa Croce's holy precincts is enough by itself to confer immortality upon Florence; for Alfieri, Michael Angelo, Galileo and Machiavelli—all were interred within this church.—But Santa Croce is more noted still for the dust which it *wants* than the dust which it *contains*; for those all-Etruscan three—Dante, Boccacio, Petrarch—neither of them found refuge in this mighty dome. Petrarch died at Arqua; Dante, driven from his native city by the rage of political faction, 'sleeps afar' 'buried by thee upbreading shore' of Ravenna; while as for Boccacio his very tomb was rifled by 'the hyæna bigot's intolerant zeal.'

Q. 7. (*a*) *What has Byron to say of Sylla and Cromwell?*
(*b*) *Also, of Napoleon and Caesar?*

(*a*) 'Sylla was uniformly fortunate, says the poet: his 'chariot moved on Fortune's wheels.' He took signal vengeance on his foes for his personal wrongs; yet he first subdued his country's

foes. Also he annihilated Senates with his frown. But he was a Roman inspite of all his vices. For did he not lay down with an atoning smile a more than mortal crown, viz. the wreath of the Roman dictator?

—But if Sylla was the first of victors, our own Cromwell was a hardly less mighty personage. He was the sagest of usurpers. He swept off senates and hewed down even the king to the executioner's block. Such were among the crimes he had to commit; and for what? To be free for a moment and to be famous through all ages.—There was one significant fact about Cromwell's life—his day of double victory was also the day of his death, thus proving that death is not the least auspicious event in a man's life.

(*c*) Byron had an exaggerated respect for Caesar—perhaps fancying that there was some supposed resemblance between him and the Roman conqueror; and he has cheapened Napoleon unnecessarily in comparison.—The Roman's mind was formed after a god-like mould, he says. He had fierce passions but a cool judgment and he had a sure and unfailing instinct which made up for the frailties of a heart at once soft and bold, in which the weakness of love was strangely mingled with the boldness of genius.

—Napoleon on the other hand was strangely constituted. He was a sort of bastard Caesar, fooled by the lust of false dominion. He had one weakest weakness—vanity; and consumed by ambition he was ever aspiring after something higher and higher. Besides he had a heart deaf towards counsel and would never listen to the still, small voice of his inner nature.

Q 8 *What moral lesson does the poet draw from the ruins of the Palatine?*

(The Palatine was one of the seven hills upon which Rome originally stood: and it was famous specially because the palaces of the Caesars stood upon its summit.)—Crushed arches, columns strewn in fragment, choked up vaults, and frescos eaten up with mildew—these are the only relics left of what was once the Imperial mount. And the moral which they preach is the moral of all human history. In the records of all nations, first we have a period of *Freedom*; then of *glory and splendour*; then of *the corruption* which comes from wealth and luxury; and lastly a period of conquest and subjection by foreign foes. Such was

the history of Greece and such is the history of which the Palatine is the silent and embodied record.

Q. 9. *Summarize Byron's remarks on Love.*

Love never was, never will be an inhabitant of the earth: it is only a mirage of the heart; the phantasy of a fevered imagination. Yet we believe in it and are ready to die for it just as people believe in unseen gods and are ready to die for their faith. —Love is not only non-existent; it is a disease, the frenzy of the youthful mind. And if the disease is bad, the cure is worse: for the cure of love is slow and bitter disenchantment, during the process of which, charm after charm drops off from the idol of the heart.

Q. 10 (*a*) *The ruins of the Coliseum suggest to Byron's mind apostrophes to Time and Nemesis. Why?*

(*b*) *What punishment does Byron invoke for his enemies? and why?*

The Coliseum was a vast and mighty structure—so vast and so mighty that people looked upon it almost as a visible embodiment of the greatness of Rome. Yet now the Coliseum itself is in ruins Thus it is an eloquent testimony, as it were, to the all destructive power of time. If the Coliseum itself can be reduced to ruins, what surety is there for the stability of any mortal thing? Thus the Coliseum naturally suggests to the mind of the poet reflections on the omnipotence of Time.

Again, the Coliseum may be looked upon as the temple of Nemesis, god of vengeance. It was in this colossal structure that the bloody gladiatorial combats of Rome took place; and it was here that the Roman millions gloated over the slaughter of innocent captives of war brought from their rude huts by the far Danube. But this ruthless slaughter was signally avenged when barbarian hordes poured in from out of the North and reduced Rome to slavery and subjection. Thus it was the cruel combats that used to take place in the Coliseum which brought a just Nemesis upon the Roman people; and it is therefore that Byron looks upon the structure as the temple of Nemesis.

Q. 11. *Summarize Byron's remarks on* (*a*) *the tomb of Metella,* (*b*) *the church of St. Peter, and* (*c*) *the statue of Apollo.*

(*a*) It is a stern, round tower of ancient days firm as a fortress which, with its fence of stone, seems strong enough to resist

the power of a whole army. And yet what is it that this massive structure contains? Only a woman's grave.

(*b*) Neither the marvellous temple of Diana at Ephesus nor the church of St. Sophia at Constantinople is so vast as St. Peter's. Since the desecration of Zion it is the greatest of tremples, old or new. Yet vast as it is, the grandeur of the place communicates itself to you and heightens your own capacities.

(*c*) There is an air of radiant triumph and exultation over the statue and in his eye and nostril a look of lofty disdain: but the delicate form is beautiful like a dream of love—beautiful as if it had been moulded in secret by some solitary nymph who was hungry for the love of a god.—If Prometheus stole fire from Heaven, that theft has been repaid by this artist who has breathed the fire of inspiration into cold marble.

Q. 12. (*a*) *Reproduce the substance of Byron's apostrophe to the Ocean.*

(*b*) *What is it about the sea that struck Byron most?*

(*a*) See *notes* on stanzas, 70-114.

(*b*) There are two things about the sea which struck Byron most. *First* the changelessness of the sea The empires which stood on her shore—Greece, Rome, Carthage—have changed and are changing. But not so they -changeless save to thy wild waves' play. *Secondly* the ocean's freedom and independence of man. Man marks the earth with ruin ; but on the watery plain the wrecks are all thy own. Man's step is not upon the sea: he cannot despoil her fields; rather it is the sea which rises in its wrath and shakes him off.

Q. 13. *Explain fully the following passages:*

(*a*) *A thousand years.....times.* St. 1

(*b*) *Ours is a trophy..... Rialto.* „ 4
(The Rialto may disappear ; the outer symbols of the city's power may perish: but the trophy which we have raised in honour of Venice is based on surer materials still.)

(*c*) *Such.....age.* 6
(*Such* has to be taken with beings of the mind and 'these spirits' in the preceding stanza—. Here it means 'the work of imaginative creation.')

(*d*) *Should I lay.....resume it* St. 9
(*e*) *Nations melt.....belt* ,, 12
(Just as avalanches remain for some time on the top of lofty peaks and then, when melted by sunshine, rush precipitately downwards, so nations remain for a time on power's high pinnacle and then rush precipitately down the path of decay).

(*f*) *Of the happiest moment.....caught* ,, 12
(*g*) *From their nature.....barrenness* ,, 20
(*h*) *It may be.....bound* ,, 23
(*i*) *Where day.....eternity* ,, 27
(Where each day, as it ends with sun-set, becomes merged in the sum-total of all the days of the past.

(*j*) *Gently blows.....waters* St. 28 & 29
(*k*) *The tide.....sun* St. 39
(Many generations will come and go, will be born and will perish. But all of them combined would not equal the genius of Tasso, just as many stars focussing their rays into one would not form one sun.)

(*l*) *Thou who hast.....past* ,, 42
(*m*) *Within the pale.....jail* ,, 49
(*n*) *Glowing brightest* ,, 52
(*o*) *In Santa Croce's.....immortality* ,, 54
(*p*) *These are four minds.....creation* ,, 55
(*q*) *For this want.....trust* ,, 59
(*r*) *On the verge.....mien* ,, 72
(The rain-bow forming over the edge of the water-fall is here compared (1) to Hope upon a death bed, and (2) to Love watching madness. —Explain the propriety of the two similes.)

(*s*) *The orphans.....petty misery* ,, 78
(*t*) *Alcides conquered* St. 90 & 91
(Caesar's character was full of strange contrarities. Now he seemed weak and effeminate and anon he shone forth in his true character and came and saw &c)
(*u*) *Few years.....tread* 92

(*v*) *For this.....triumph* St. 92
(Is it for such a fate as this viz. to be reduced to the dust that conquerors rear their proud arches.')

(*w*) *Slaves who wage—...same tree* „ 94
(A bitter expression of Byron's real or affected contempt for mankind).

(*x*) *Can tyrants.....be* „ 96
(Is it necessary, is it in the course of things, that one set of tyrants must only give place to another set? In other words, is it inevitable that those who conquer tyrants must themselves be tyrants?)

(*y*) *France got drunk.....cause* „ 97
(*z*) *Yet could I.....back of hope* St. 104, 105
(*a'*) *And history.....page* St. 108
(*b'*) *Tully base* „ 110
(*c'*) *Egeria !.....ideal breast* 115
(*d'*) *Of its own beauty.....fair* 122
(*e'*) *There is given.....dower* 129
(*f'*) *There is that.....expire* 137
(The poet is referring with proud self-consciousness to the immortality of his works.)

(*g'*) *These three what I will* „ 145
The antithesis which the author intends has not been well brought out.—The fall of one, the physical fall of the Coliseum, had been prophesied as involving the fall of the others.—In one sense all these three things still stand—i.e. stand physically; and yet, in another sense, is not the moral decay of Rome complete?)

(*h'*) *The starry fable.....purity* „ 151
(*i'*) *How smiles.....birth* „ 152
(*j'*) *Thou shalt.....his brow* „ 155
(*k'*) *Thou movest,.....immensity* „ 156
(The meaning is simple but the construction is condensed. 'You move; but as the capacity of your mind increases with the advance, you are deceived by the gigantic elegance of the structure.')

(*l'*) *Piecemeal.....whole* „ 157
(*m'*) *And if it be.....human thought* „ 163

(*n'*) *Destruction mass.....twilight* St. 164, 165
1. Destruction ..spreads its pall...glow. 2. The cloud *sinks* between as and all which everglowed and displays a hal &')

(*o'*) *Some suffering.....begun* St. 176
(Byron is thinking of the few and unblest years of his married life.—In spite of these changes in my life I am to day as lonely and melancholy as I ever was.)

(*p'*) *I love.....before* ,, 178

(*q'*) *Man marks.....his own* ,, 179

(*r'*) *Thou send'st him.....bay* ,, 180

(*s'*) *Thy waters.....tyrant smile* ,, 182

(*t'*) *Unchangeable.....azure brow* ,, ,,
(Time which leaves the mark of its ravages upon all faces is powerless against you.)

Q. 14. *Annotate the following passages* :

(*a*) *She looks a Sea-cybele* St. 2

(*b*) *The songless Gondolier* ,, 3

(*c*) *The spouseless Adriatic* ,, 11

(*d*) *Is not of.....to pass* ,, 13
(Doria threatened that he would curb the unbridled steeds of Venice. Has not that boast been fulfilled—though not by Doria ? Has not the power of Venice been subdued ?

(*e*) *Her very byword.....victory* ,, 15
(Even the common surname of the Venetians was an index of their power.)

(*f*) *The ocean queen.....children—* ,, 17

(*g*) *Nor can trace.....mind* ,, 24
(We can feel the shock of remembered sorrow but cannot trace it back to its cause.)

(*h*) *The commonwealth.....Rome* ,, 26

(*i*) *Those who their morality have felt* ,, 32

(*j*) *Mother of arts as once of arms ! parent of art and religion !* ,, 47

(*k*) *The Etrurian Athens* ,, 42

(*l*) *The paltry jargon of the marble mart* ,, 50

(*m*) *More deeply blest Anchises* ,, 51

(*n*) *The artist and his ape* ,, 53

(*o*) *The all Etruscan three* ,, 56.

(*p*) *The infant Alps* ,, 73
Infant in a double sense—(1) because they are small mountains in miniature as it were; (2) also, because they are an offshoot of the Alps)

(*q*) *I have seen the eagles fly.....spot* St. 74

(*r*) *The Niobe of nations* ,, 78
(Niobe was the mother of many children and lost them all. So Rome had been the mistress of many nations and had lost them all.)

(*s*) *The very sepulchres.....dwellers* ,, 79

(*t*) *We but feel our way to ever* ,, 81
(We grope through darkness; and all our groping leads but to errors.)

(*u*) *These.....resurrecton* ,, 82

(*v*) *Whose chair.....wheel* ,, 83

(*w*) *Thy foster-babes, the men of iron* ,, 89

(*x*) *Their hereditary rage* ,, 94

(*y*) *Worthy a king's.....bed* ,, 100

(*z*) *Hectic light.....dead* ,, 102

(*a'*) *The field.....blood* ,, 113

(*b'*) *The boundless upas.....tree* ,, 126

(*c'*) *Let us ponder boldly* ,, 127
(Let us be bold in our speculation.)

(*d'*) *Thou who have yet.....Nemesis* ,, 132

(*e'*) *I sleep.....awake* ,, 133

(*f'*) *The seal is set* ,, 138

(*g'*) *The bloody circus' genial laws* ,, 139

(*h'*) *Shall he expire.....ire—* ,, 141

(*i'*) *My voice sounds much* ,, 142

(*j'*) *In this magic.....dead* ,, 144

(*k'*) *Time's scythe.....there* ,, 146

(*l'*) *Colossal copyist of deformity* ,, 152

(*m'*) *The usurping Moslem* ,, 153

(*n'*) *Our outward sense.....grasp* ,, 158

(*o'*) *Be enlightened* ,, 159
(Acquaint yourself with details about the structure.

(*p'*) *He count.....long* ,, 164

(*q'*) *The fickle reek.....ears* ,, 171

(*r'*) *My visions.....before me* ,, 185